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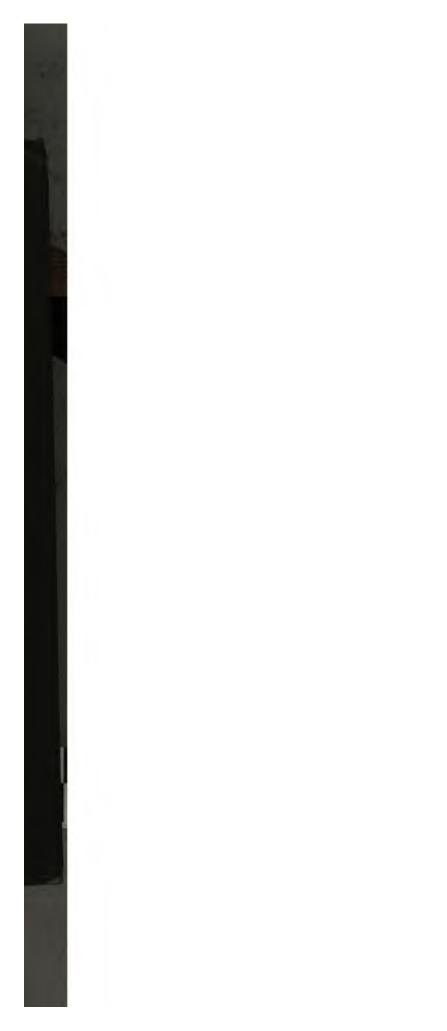
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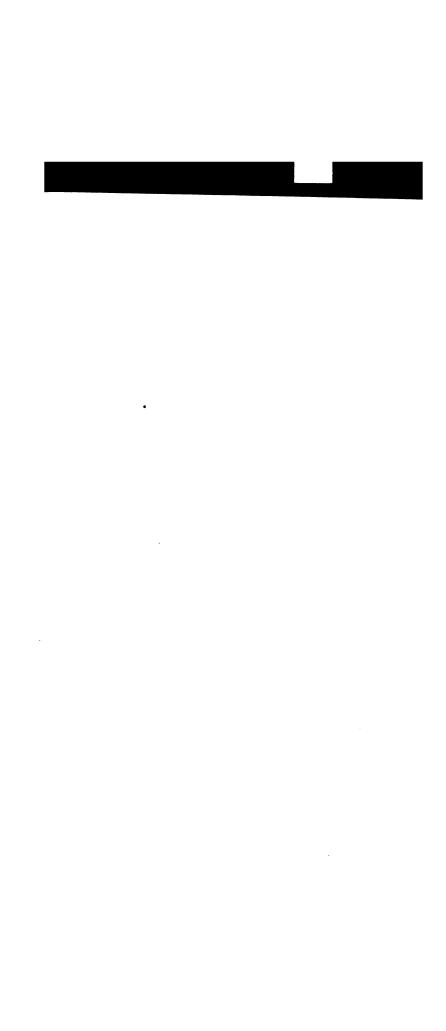
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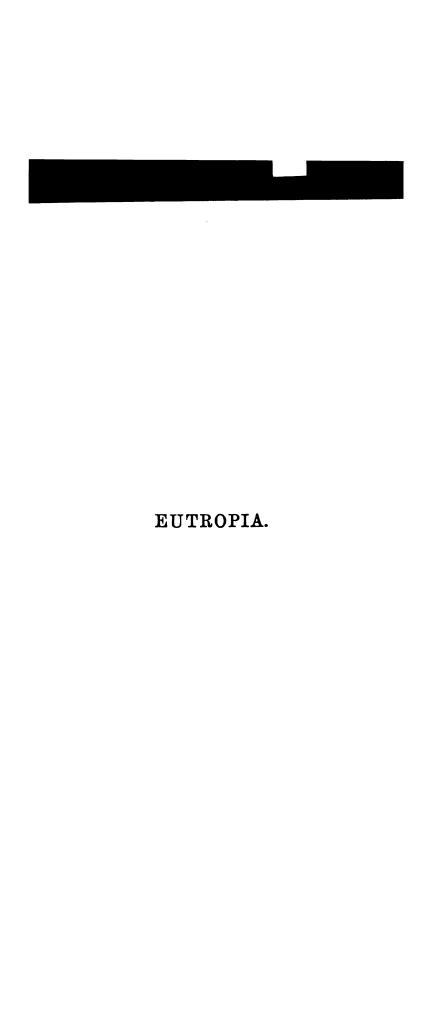
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# EUTROPIA:

OR

## how to find a Way

### OUT OF DARKNESS AND DOUBT INTO LIGHT AND CERTAINTY.

BY

THE REV. FATHER PIUS DEVINE,
PASSIONIST.

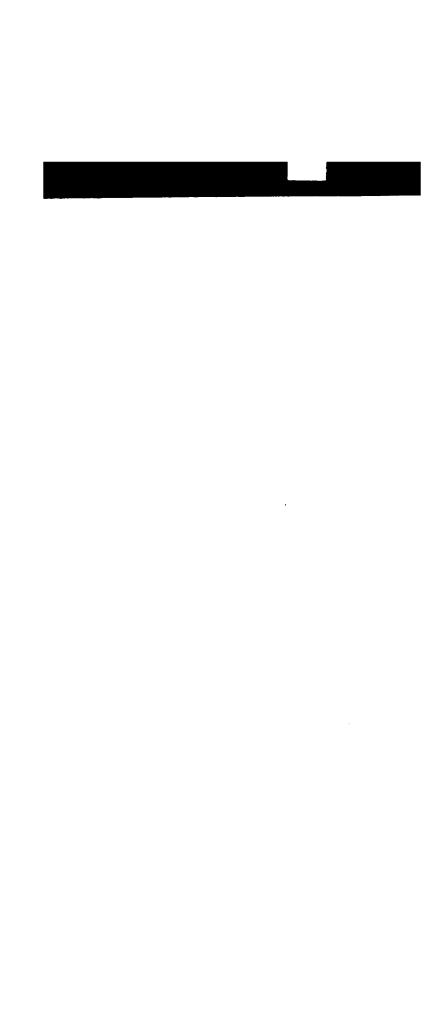




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#### PREFACE.

A FEW words of apology for the appearance in print of the following pages may not be out of place.

So many works have been written upon conversions to the Catholic Church that an addition to their number would seem to be uncalled for; yet there are so many various ways in which grace works conversion, that, did each require a book, our libraries could not contain the volumes that should be written. The works treating on this subject are generally written by converts; and at first sight no one would seem to have a better right to show light to those who are in darkness than one who has struggled into light through the many tortuous and darksome paths of error. Who is so well qualified to enlighten those who sit in darkness than one who once sat there himself? Who can sympathise so well with earnest souls seeking for truth and unable to find it as one who went through the laborious operation in his own day? No one but a convert can cast himself for a time into the position of a person outside the Church, and subjectively feel the difficulties which lie in his path.

There is, however, one objection to so plain and self-evident a supposition. Each individual convert comes into the Church by a different road. attracted by a certain dogma, another by quite a different one. One receives the grace of conversion by intercourse with Catholic friends, another by recoiling at the abuse which the enemies of the Church unconsciously heap upon her in his hearing. One is converted by extensive reading, another by fervent prayer. One is converted by a sermon, another by the silent working of grace. One is moved by the grandeur of the Church's liturgy, another by the silent worshippers at Low Mass. Scarcely any two given converts come into the Church by the same Now each neophyte thinks that his way is the best way (it has been so to him undoubtedly), and imagines that, by dwelling upon it more emphatically, he is doing a great work for his separated brethren. It may happen that his separated brother abhors the very thing he sets so much store by, and will get grace in its very opposite. Other ways of conversion he will learn to understand by experience, and the conclusion come to thereby is generally to lay aside controversy altogether, and let the Church shine by her own splendour.

These pages are written by one who had the hap-

piness of being born of Catholic parents, and knew nothing about heresy or converts until he began to learn his theology. Eighteen years of missionary work, in various parts of the world, have not been without their influence in moulding the manner in which a convert is to be instructed.

The writer has been many years employed in teaching theology, and knows, by his own experience and that of others, how difficult it is for a young priest to apply his dogmatic theology at once to each practical case as it arises. The application of moral theology is difficult enough; but then it concerns matters which do not soar into the doubts and difficulties of credence and opinion, and the springs of our own actions give us aid in unravelling the goodness and defects of the actions of others.

To apply dogmatic theology is more difficult. We learn its teachings in strict scholastic form, lay down our definitions, our proofs and confirmaturs from Scripture, tradition, Fathers, Councils, reason, and authority. We illustrate each as well as may be, and then proceed to demolish objections by scholastic distinctions and explanations. The work is made for us, and we study it and apply it after our own fashion. When, however, we meet the concrete proposition, which we have long ago disproved to our own satisfaction, in a living person, furnished with a voice, a reasoning peculiarly its own, and a

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#### PREFACE.

strong adherence on which we did not calculate, it becomes quite a formidable affair. It was an ens rationis to us once, it becomes an ens reale now. One can take a steady aim at a man of straw; but it is not so easy to have a cool nerve when the man of straw gives place to a real man, with a pistol in his hand. Some such surprise is apt to meet a young priest in his first contact with living and breathing Beginning, as we do, to study theology with a reverential mind, believing everything as firmly before we opened the learned tome as we do when we have shut it, we can scarcely imagine the dispositions of those who attempt the study of sacred knowledge with doubt and sometimes with contempt of the doctrines we hold dearer than our lives. is well, then, to lay down, as a fundamental rule, in dealing with error, that no one sticks to an erroneous system on account of the falsehoods it contains. It is the small portion of truth which every wrong system has in it which first attracts the adhesion of its holder, and the errors creep in as the graceful fringes of the centre-piece. The great secret of gaining the confidence of an inquirer after truth is, to know all the good things which are to be found in his system, and give him credit for adhering to it in consequence. This is the generous and charitable way of helping an erring brother or sister. wrangle about the faults and shortcomings of a system whilst its best parts are ignored savours strongly of heresy, or of the nobelief which fastens upon the defects of the Church as a justification of its own existence. This will account for the care and fairness with which the leading or organised systems of error are explained in some of the following chapters.

The work consists chiefly of four parts. In the first eighteen chapters are pointed out some of the ways in which the grace of conversion may visit souls, and how it is to be fostered. Grace can oftentimes do its work independently of man's care; but as God chooses secondary agents for carrying out His designs, and as His priests are those to whom the preaching and teaching of truth are committed, it is well for a priest never to forget that graces may prove inefficacious for want of correspondence on the part of the recipient, and that this want may sometimes be attributable to his carelessness, indifference, or negligence.

The next eighteen chapters treat of the systems of unbelief from which converts come to the Church every day. Their essential perfections and defects alone are pointed out; and it is left to the priest to follow up the others by his private reading of the special apologists who have written on them more in detail. It is true that the present followers of the old heresiarchs do not hold the teaching of their

masters, and would hardly be able to formulate their doctrines if called upon to do so. As a scattered form of belief can never be met except it be put into some tangible shape, so it must always be useful, when a person confesses the system to which he belongs, to give the leading dogmas to him, and ask him if he holds to those. This done, and noting the points of divergence, is the shortest way to settling difficulties without loss of time.

The third part of the book is taken up with the settling of final doubts and objections, as well as the practical manner of reception.

A few chapters are added on the care of converts after they have been received into the Church. Some imagine that the work is done as soon as they are confirmed; and, in many cases, such is the fact, but in the great majority of cases a certain fostering afterwards is very necessary.

The new fervour of a convert is like the feeling of St. Peter at the Transfiguration: 'Lord, it is good for us to be here;' but when temptations come, and when darkness sets in, and when they are inclined to warm themselves at the fire in Pilate's atrium, they may forget the forewarnings of our Redeemer, and fall into temptation,

The book may very profitably be put into the hands of the better instructed, even before their conversion; but as the principle followed through-

out is that faith should come by hearing and not by reading, the giving of a book to help a convert is a matter to be left to each one's prudence and the exigency of special cases.

St. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate, N. Feast of the Epiphany, 1880.



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## EUTROPIA.

#### CHAPTER I.

THE INSTINCT OF FAITH.

FAITH is defined by St. Paul, 'Sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium,'—'The groundwork of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not' (Heb. xi. 1). It is a fixed and certain conviction that articles or dogmas concerning the supernatural are true, because God has been pleased to reveal them to us. The means at our disposal for distinguishing between what God has revealed and what He has not is the authority of the Catholic Church.

The Articles of Faith have been the foundations upon which Christianity was built up; the conclusions drawn from them the decorations which give it beauty, symmetry, and sublimity. A bare-walled church is no more typical of the work of God than a barkless and leafless tree would be of His earthly laws of growth. Faith never comes alone. Bare faith is an inconceivable thing, except, perchance, in such extreme cases as a penitent thief. If we imagine the cutting down of the mystical mustard-tree, we can form some idea of the destruction of faith. We be-

hold its branches cut off and withered, the trunk sawed asunder near the ground, and the bleak barren stump alone remaining. From this shoot up various saplings, of more or less similarity to the original, but sadly sick and wavering. Such may give an idea of the remains of faith in countries where it has been lost. The roots still remain; some external semblance of life still remains; it cumbers the ground to a certain extent; but the vitality, the universal shelter and shade, have nearly all departed. Take up root and branch, run the ploughshare over the spot where once it flourished, and there remains nothing but the remembrances of scenes once enacted at its base, and the enjoyments once fostered by its wide-spreading branches.

The Faith once delivered to the Saints may be someway likened to the tree of which we are speaking. Where it once flourishes, it may be hewn down and scattered, but the roots and saplings still remain; and if it be wholly rooted up, as in Africa and elsewhere, some sweet recollections of its existence and verdure remain in the pages of its annals and lives of its Saints.

The faith never dies a natural death. Its forced destruction only causes it to multiply. In looking at faith in this way we must examine how it takes root in the hearts of the faithful in order to understand what is meant by the Instinct of Faith.

There is in man naturally an innate love for the supernatural, a hankering after the knowledge of things not bounded by the phenomena of this visible

world. There never was a tribe of barbarians discovered yet in whom were not found some germs of the supernatural; and whether this has come from an original revelation, or is only the outcome of the responsibility which conscience dictates, we do not now inquire. Every man has a conscience, and no one can do evil but that conscience upbraids him. He feels that he is responsible for evil deeds done in the dark-and to whom? This thought, when elaborated, forms one of the most beautiful proofs of the existence of God given in our manuals of metaphysics. and may in some measure account for the fact that we all have an idea of the supernatural. Faith administers to this notion the food of higher knowledge for which it longs; and, if it be grafted hereon before error comes to destroy it, beautiful and perfect in the extreme is the nature of the instinct implanted.

The instinct of faith is that indefinable something which moves its possessor unconsciously to recognise what is true, to love what is righteous, to cling to what it recognises, to follow what it loves, to feel satisfaction in goodness, recta sapere, and an instinctive antipathy to evil. As instinct guides the birds to the building of their nests, and other animals to make provision for their young, and lay up stores for winter sustenance, so does this instinct move its possessor to be wise in things of heaven. As it is difficult to set out its peculiarities in a few phrases, it may be as well to examine how it shows itself, by passing in review a few of the classes of people in whom it manifests itself.

came in response. They have trusted them with a great many of their family secrets, and left to their judgment the framing of their agreements, and their petitions to their landlords or boards of guardians. These local Solomons wield undoubtedly a very extensive power, which is conceded to them, nem. con., by the untutored rustics, in consequence of their superior knowledge. Let them, however, but broach anything that has the appearance of a heresy, and, all at once, the ties are broken, confidence is lost; and it is shrewdly suspected that the evil one, or an emissary of his, in the shape of some neighbouring non-Catholic, is at the bottom of the whole affair. Sometimes the faith gains by this, as errors are prevented from creeping in; but sometimes, also, it suffers in those who think its obligations a yoke, and are glad to barter its difficulties for material gain or position.

Take another instance. One of these happily benighted people travels into the land of heresy and hears strange doctrines. He may, perchance, learn to read, and assist at non-Catholic services. He gets his mind saturated with what are called the errors of the Church of Rome, and has every single spike of error rammed into him with a Scripture text or two; for, as the poet says,

'E'en ministers, they had been kenned,
In holy rapture,
A rousing whid at times to vend,
And nail't wi' Scripture.'

He comes home to his primitive village with a

Bible under his arm, and reads portions of it for his friends, when they assemble around his hearth on wintry evenings to hear the folk-lore of the neighbourhood. By degrees he begins to disseminate the errors he has learnt; but the end invariably is, that they all go home in a sad state, forecasting misfortunes for his family, and a death without a priest to himself. The peasants of Connaught and Munster will point out villages now depopulated because of the curse brought in the midst of them by those who, within the last fifty years, imported there the seeds of heresy from England; playfully remarking, perhaps, that such doctrines are like the 'sarpints,' which could never thrive on Irish soil since St. Patrick-'God bless him!'-banished them out of it hundreds of years ago.

The Spirit of Truth thus preserves an antipathy to error in the minds of the unlettered, which is too strong even for poverty to force, or riches to cajole out of them, unless sin or immorality first banish the abiding blessing. This may be called the instinct of faith.

If this instinct be so firm and obdurate with regard to new errors, it is, on the contrary, equally ready and, one might say, voracious for the acceptance of what those outside the Church may call new dogmas or definitions of Faith. The reason of this is obvious. There are no such things as new dogmas in the Catholic Church. They all exist in the deposit of faith, and only time and circumstances call for their development or declaration. There can scarcely

sacred garment has been rent, is a serious oversight. There is a fine ground for good substantial work, and for the planting of right good seeds, in the small tatters that are so much despised.

Two ideas have always been found among the most savage people—an idea of some great presiding being, and an idea of sacrifice. These primordial ideas may have undergone changes in the course of The idea of the Supreme Being may be distributed among a number of minor deities or idols, and the nature of sacrifice may take strange and grovelling shapes, from the sacrifice of rice in a Chinese pagoda to the human victims of Dahomey; but that the ideas exist no one can deny. sometimes said that the aborigines of Australia, who are supposed to be the lowest in the scale of savagery itself, have no distinct ideas of either a great being or a sacrifice. Research, however, has found that this notion is incorrect. Like the ancient Mexicans, their notions of the Superior Being are coupled more with fear than love, and they try to propitiate him rather by appeasing his wrath than by gaining his protection. One thing cannot escape an observer, and that is their notions of sacrifice. At a certain time of the year, the priest or wise man of the tribe makes a case of dried earth, into which he sheds blood from his own arm. This case is then closed and wrapped up in leaves and other coverings, carried in a canoe amid shoutings and gesticulations, until it is deposited in some chosen spot of a river, and danced at in a corroborry. The deity is supposed to be then

propitiated, and not one of the tribe will ever venture to pass over that spot of the river in a canoe at any price. Here is the idea of sacrifice, and so far corresponding to the words of St. Paul, 'without shedding of blood, there is no remission.'

Nothing can account for this general instinct—pervading the untutored of the human race—except the grand fact that man originally fell, and that sacrifice is the only mode, both of acknowledging the supreme dominion of God and atoning for man's transgression. There has been no people yet discovered without traces, indistinct and strangely corrupted as they may be, of this twofold instinct.

Furthermore, this instinct has been accompanied by another, which makes man believe in disembodied The various forms which this primeval notion has assumed would make the subject of a particular and very interesting study. It might branch off into the notions about devils, fairies, ghosts, the sylvan deities of peculiar groves, and the sprites supposed to haunt fountains and rivers; or it might range through the genii of the Arabians to the system of the Roscicrucians, and settle down at last in the investigation of the media which bring supposed messages from the other world into the séances of modern Spiritualists. The investigation of this or that system of spiritual agency does not fall within our scope. Let it suffice to allude to the universal prevalence of the idea, and to point out that its existence can be accounted for only on the supposition that a correct notion of the evil one and of the nature of the angels was given to mankind in the beginning, and that ignorance and superstition have perverted and metamorphosed that notion in the various grotesque shapes it now presents to the student.

A belief of this nature is one of the surest signs that mankind has always received, as an article of its faith, the immortality of the soul, and faint notions of the Resurrection. The apotheosis of pagan nations, and the metempsychosis of Pythagoras, which prevails so extensively in the Eastern forms of pagan worship, are but the reduction of vague and prevailing notions into a system. Our knowledge of the aborigines of Australia will also corroborate this. They imagine that a good black fellow will, after death, 'jump up' a white man in the course of some time. It is not long since a whole tribe came to look in awe and amazement at a brawny 'navvy' who was digging for gold in the fields of Ballarat. He could not find out why he was such an object of intense curiosity until, by signs and half-English expressions, he discovered that he had a large mole on his right arm, which corresponded exactly to one which decorated a chief of the tribe who had died recently. They thought the chief had risen again, and appeared amongst them in the shape of this digger, and they offered him the full command of their tribe with the greatest possible reverence.

That these ideas, filtered through various obscure and ill-defined notions of immortality, should cause an anxiety to inquire about another world, and pry into the future, here and hereafter, is but natural. Hence we find, in all countries, divination, sorcery, witchcraft, magic, astrology, and a thousand curious modes of obtaining, or endeavouring to obtain, knowledge beyond the province of natural aids.

This presence of the supernatural in men's thoughts gave rise to feelings of reverence, which naturally transferred veneration to the places, persons, and things supposed to be, or known to be, the organs of supernatural knowledge. In every country, therefore, the temple, or the grove, or the shrine where divine honours were paid, where sacrifices were offered, and whence mysteries were propounded became objects of peculiar respect.

That such places should exist was a natural sequence to man's belief. As man is composed of body and soul, the body should have place wherein to pour forth the thoughts of the soul in veneration of the Deity. Such places possessed a peculiar claim upon the respect of all thinking, and even unthinking, people. They were separated from ordinary resorts of human mundane duties, and used only for the homage of the people.

In like manner, the persons appointed or set apart for the direction of man's worship were surrounded with something of an awe-inspiring nature. The instruments also used in sacrifice or oblations partook of the same sacredness. When, therefore, we read of the Eleusinian mysteries, the Temples of Diana or Apollo, the Druidical Groves, the priests of

the various cults which have existed in the world, and the degrees of reverence attached to all things thereto belonging, we rise to a contemplation of the Ark of the Covenant, the Jewish Temple, the Tribe of Levi, and the culmination of all in the majestic and holy system which has beautified and regulated Christian worship down to our own days.

Sacrilege has been considered a sin of peculiar atrocity in all ages and countries; and there are not wanting many evidences of terrible visitations having pointed out how hateful in the eye of Heaven is the profanation of anything once consecrated to the service of the Supreme Being. That many of these notions of reverence have grown to excess; that many of the objects of them have been deceivers; that many of the vulgar have been considerably duped by them; and that many errors, sins, cruelties, and atrocities have been perpetrated under the cloak of religion, whether true or false, is only another way of saying that sacred things are committed to the care of sinful men, and that the best and holiest of God's priests and servants are not angels. Abuses are the natural concomitants of earthly blessings; but an abuse does not destroy the blessing it turns aside; it only shows its beauty by contrast.

If we did away with all the benefits which science and research have conferred upon the human race, because quacks and charlatans can abuse them, we would reduce this world to a desert, and man to a grade lower than the most benighted

Hottentot. It is the part of sound reason and good sense to find 'sermons in stones, and good in everything.' God saw the works of His hands, and declared them good; and so far do philosophers go, in their disquisitions, as to state categorically that the devil himself has some goodness in him. we perceive our sensibilities shocked, and our sense of justice outraged, by all the evils which have been done by false religions and evil teachings, it is not well to condemn everything, and, like the still imperfect Apostles, wish to call down fire from heaven upon them; or, like the unwise husbandman, go to pull up all the weeds by the roots, to the danger of trampling the wheat. Let us rather wisely pick out what is good, and what is capable of being made the instrument of good, thus imitating the splendid genius of the Catholic Church.

She took the world as it was. She took every good thing in it, and consecrated it to her service; and when she abolished whatever was soul-destroying among the practices or habits of nations, she was careful to save from the wreck whatever bore the impress of Heaven, and, having freed it from its corruptions, set it up as the aim of the ambition of her newly-born sons.

The philosophy of Greek sophists, the art of Roman rhetoricians, the arts of painting and sculpture, the sweet strains of song, and the gorgeous temples from which the idols were taken away, she consecrated to her own majestic worship, filled with her own spirit, blessed with her own inspiration, and

caused them to be embellished by the genius and talents of her most devoted children.

Whatever is good in man is the gift of God. Mind, genius, art, science, culture, learning, poetry, and fine arts can all be made steps leading heavenwards; and it is only the most perverted of minds that will not see every excellence ennobled when it has God for its end, virtue for its guide, holiness for its model, and the reward of a faithful servant in eternity for its recompense.

The proper way, therefore, of looking at an unregenerate world is to do so with the eyes of the Catholic Church—eyes which prejudice does not dim, and which sophistry cannot blindfold.

#### CHAPTER IV.

#### PROTESTANT INSTINCTS.

It has been said by nearly all writers on the Reformation that its ultimate tendency was towards infidelity; and events have but too sadly proved that their opinion was right.

The infidelity which infects portions of the Latin race in modern times is quite different from the systematic infidelity of the Teutonic school of thought. An Italian, French, or Spanish infidel gathers up his faith in one hand like a sickly tree, and with the other cuts it down and flings it from him. He kicks the withering trunk and spurns it from his presence,

with oaths and blasphemies, and screams his infidel notions at the top of his bent to drown the voice of his conscience. He leaves the roots within him all the while, and his ever-active propagandism of error and his extremes of diabolical hate are adopted, lest the roots might sprout again if he gave them a moment's rest. He takes to an immoral life on atheistic principles, to try the strength of his emancipation from the Church. Indeed, the crowd of Latin infidels reminds one strongly of the legion of devils our Lord cast out and ordered into the swine. They never stopped running on their course until drowning ended their mad career.

A Teutonic infidel is quite a different kind of phenomenon. He lets the tree stand. He first picks up one root, deliberately examines it, and gruffly puts it aside as a nuisance. He then takes another, and eke another, until, every single root having been pulled up and bleached out of life by his arguments, the tree falls of its own accord, and his mind is prepared for any amount of systems that can be evoked from the depth of human consciousness. He is never uneasy. He blandly smiles on all forms of belief, rises superior to anything like a weakness for the supernatural, puts away remorse as he would a bad dream, and finds his earthly happiness—the only one he desires—in beer, smoke, and metaphysics.

The instinct of heresy is destructiveness. Something must be destroyed; it feels its hands impelled to pull down; it is urged on by a kleptomania for sacred things, and only waits for a plausible justifi-

cation. Scripture is a very convenient fount of arguments. All hold the Scriptures to be the Word of God; but then the Scriptures cannot speak, except in mute written words. What is better, then, than to wrest those into destructive engines?

There is a grand distinction to be drawn between those heresics which preceded the sixteenth century and those which the world has wondered at since. The heresies which rent the ancient Church were of a spiritual nature, with few exceptions; whilst the heresies of modern times tend more in the direction of gratifying the appetites. The distinction, however, is more evident in the consequences than in the theories of the heresies themselves. What makes the great difference in their theories is that the old heresies left the Real Presence, or the Sacrifice of the Mass, alone; whilst the modern heresies all attack, deny, or cast out of their systems altogether this centre of Christianity.

Herein is seen the astuteness of the spirit which inspired modern heresy. Take away the Real Presence, take away the Sacrifice of the Mass, and you destroy the first element of worship, nay, you take away worship itself. There can be no sacrifice without a victim to be immolated; and although sacrifice is always offered to the Supreme Being, yet its value has always been supposed to be enhanced by the dignity of the victim. The blood of oxen and lambs made a sweet savour to the God of Israel before Christianity; but when the One great Victim was immolated on Calvary all these figures had an end.

By a grand ordinance of His divine love it was appointed that the same sacrifice should be repeated, in a mystical way, upon the altars of the Church, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, until the end of time. This was the centre of Christian worship, and around it was grouped, and from it proceeded, every single excellence in liturgy, in ceremony, in ornament, in ecclesiastical laws, in hierarchy, which still attests the heaven-born origin and the divine beauty of the Catholic Church.

When the Real Presence is taken away, there is no more need for the altar; when the altar is taken away, there is no more need for its ornaments; when the ornaments are taken away, the church becomes a four-walled carcass. The skill of the architect is then employed in upholstering for the comfort of preachers, prebendaries, and hearers, and their ingenuity is displayed in pulpits, reading-desks, choirstalls, and soporific pews. It is sad to see the material edifice thus disrobed and its soul fled; but it is sadder still to examine the consequences which ensue.

Take away the Real Presence, and you take away the friends of Jesus from the church. There is no more need for adoring Angels around the tabernacle, and His select friends the Saints are out of place in a temple where He is not. Nay, the very figure of Himself upon the Cross is not required; for it might remind you of Him who is no longer there. When the images of the Saints are taken away from the church, their lives must be taken out of people's

hands, and their invocation must consequently be forbidden. It must have gone hard with the first Protestants to remove the Blessed Mother of God from their churches and from their ritual and liturgy. One can fancy the wrench which Catholic instinct had to undergo when, intoxicated with the spirit of iconoclasm, or following the teaching of a John Knox, it felt called upon to deal a vandalic blow at the sweet effigy of the Blessed Virgin. Around her had centred all the poetry and charm of the Church's devotion for centuries. The love of her and the honour paid to her inspired chivalry and respect for the purity and modesty of woman. Is all that to be shattered to fragments by the sacrilegious hand of a Reformer? The logic of facts must tell.

When there is no sacrifice there is no priest. Ordination then is simply the designation of one or other layman to lead in psalmody or vociferate scattered texts. Logically there is no need of either church or meeting-house if there be no Real Presence. If they quote 'Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them,' then two or three may be gathered together as well under the arches made by the boughs of forest-trees, or under the blue vault of heaven, as under the roof of a temple made with hands. Lutherans and Anglicans still kept their churches and some sort of a liturgy, and the swell of the majestic organ was allowed to inspire devotion, as its notes echoed through the aisles of our old cathedrals; but one cannot help admiring the stern logic of the

Scotch, who flung the communion-table into the fire to make room for the pulpit, and pitched the 'kist of whistles' into the Clyde to instal in its place a bald-headed precentor. The bare extempore worship of the strict Presbyterian is verily more logical, on Reformation principles, than the garbled liturgy of the Church of England, which King James I. said was 'nae but an ill-said Mass.' Bishops, priests, and deacons have no place in a church where there is no sacrifice; and to keep the semblance after the reality has been rejected is certainly something like a However, this is not our present concern; sham. all we want to see is that the instinct of Protestantism is destruction. This spirit, with the right of private judgment for its guide, has led people, naturally enough, into deism; and from deism to infidelity there is but one step.

The destruction of the æsthetic attributes of the Church by the Puritans had a serious effect upon all arts and sciences, and also perverted the finest instincts which Nature implanted in the breasts of those who were frozen by its influence.

The abolition of the devotion to our Lady and the Saints took away all romance and heroism. The works of fiction which were composed in Catholic times gave faultless heroes and heroines, because the writers had Saints before them for models; the canvas of the painter teemed with inspired figures, because Angels and Saints sat in the mind of the artist to guide his brush. The mysteries of religion and their votaries gave the same impulse to the hand of

the sculptor. What has the instinct of Protestantism done with all these arts? The heroes of modern novels are of the earth earthy, and the heroines are very far from the bare suspicion of sanctity. Where can we come across a conception like the Portia or Isabella of Shakespeare? He lived in Catholic times, took his noble themes from Catholic stories, and made his heroines noble women. We search in vain amongst writers of romance in modern times for anything of the kind.

Let us enter our national galleries and the studios of our modern sculptors. What do we behold? Oxen and horses and dogs have to sit for the models of our Landseers and others, whilst the highest idea of art may be the intrigues of a Court or the sports of an ignoble peasantry. Nature is copied with a vengeance; for, alas, there is nothing but Nature—and Nature in deformity and wretchedness—to inspire the genius of a Hogarth or a Turner.

Milton's poetry is inspired, because his theme is the supernatural; and where could we have got the grand music which lifts the soul to heaven if the theme of the Mass did not exist to inspire a Mozart or a Haydn? The destruction of one dogma had entailed vast ruins, like the pillars which Samson moved in his blindness.

This spirit of Protestantism not only lowered the conceptions of art by introducing the real instead of the ideal, but it crushed the good aspirations and feelings of the heart for spiritual things or turned after unworthy objects.

What is more natural than cherishing the memory of our departed friends? The doctrine of Purgatory in the Catholic Church finds a beautiful niche in which this feeling can be placed. When this doctrine is taken away, what remains to connect us with the departed? We may not pray for them; we may not ask others to pray for them; we may not commune with their spirits in heaven, if we believe them to have gone there; and the article of the Creed, whereby we say, 'I believe in the communion of Saints,' has no place in Protestant devotion. A very curious illustration of the void created by the abolition of this devotion was witnessed a few years ago. Several Catholics and a Protestant friend went to visit a graveyard in which the bodies of members related to each were buried. When the Catholics came to the graves of their friends, they knelt down and said a few prayers; but when the Protestant took his companions to the family grave, after expatiating on the beauty of the headstone, he knew not what further to do. He thought he should do something sacred, and forthwith he took off his hat and reverently kissed the name of his departed wife or sister upon the stone. This was gracefully and nicely done; but his companions felt that there was a sad void in his system of worship, which provided no other way of communing with the dead. The incident was afterwards the means of his conversion.

The veneration of relics, again, is a most natural and beautiful devotion. Who does not cherish an

article belonging to a friend far away or departed this life? What is the veneration of relics but transferring to the Saints, with a holier devotion, the love that nature prompts to pay to our absent friends? Put away the veneration of the relics of Saints, and you will have people striving and paying high prices for swords belonging to warriors, for furniture belonging to beauties, for the autographs of departed authors, for anything that reminds us of those we admire or venerate.

Nay, so ineradicable is this propensity that, if it be not allowed to worship what is excellent, it will take to gratifying morbid appetites. We shall see then the rope that hung Palmer sold at five shillings an inch, and groups worshipping around statues of murderers in the chamber of horrors at Madame Tussaud's, especially if criminals be dressed in the very clothes they wore at the time of committing the foul deed which they had to expiate with their lives.

It is useless to try and stamp out the instincts which faith has consecrated. Naturam expelles furca tamen usque recurret. It is better to find objects worthy of admiration for the best inclinations of our nature, and consecrate these, as well as our souls and bodies, to the worship of the Creator. Notwithstanding the efforts of Reformers and three centuries of teaching founded mainly upon negations, there exist still in the rude and simple various evidences of some half-flickering sparks of the sensus fidelium or instinct of faith.

They certainly believe in God and in a more

intimate relation with His Providence than their theory and practice of worship would warrant. They have still a notion of His presiding over their daily concerns, and have a sense of the heinousness of blasphemy and perjury. They worship Him in their conventicles, more for the conscientious motive of giving Him thanks and asking His pardon than for the mere custom of appearing in clean clothes on the Sabbath morning among their neighbours.

Their ideas of sacrifice are, of course, very vague and indefinite, if not altogether chaotic; but still they retain very grateful remembrances of the Atonement of Calvary. It is a pity that the coldness of heresy has deprived them, to a great extent, of solid notions of the Incarnation; because their idea of Jesus is that He was some great and good man who lived many years ago. They cannot feel Him present; but look upon Him as having gone to heaven, and residing there altogether. Indeed, their belief in Him is scarcely higher, and their knowledge of Him considerably less, than the reverence a Catholic testifies and feels towards the last canonised Saint of his Church.

Although in the conventicle, to which they chiefly go for worship, they can have no clear and distinct notion of Orders or Priesthood, since their preacher may be a neighbouring grocer or cobbler, yet they have an innate reverence for a priest, and look upon him as leading a sort of enchanted life, which it is dangerous to meddle with. They go so far sometimes in Cornwall and Devonshire as to think and

say that the Catholic religion was the first, and they imagine it will be the last. There is no priest who has not had Protestants kneel for his blessing, time after time, in order to get cured of diseases that afflict them; and it may be safely asserted that they have not the same faith in their own ministers.

Many other signs of the instinct of faith may be found, varying according to traditions and modern teachings, which, though they seem not very hopeful of future quiet, would yet dispose us not to despair that God will yet breathe upon these dead bones and make them live.

# CHAPTER V.

## INSTINCTS IN THE HALF-EDUCATED.

THOSE Catholics may be considered as half-educated who have had the course of an ordinary elementary school, without any or very little collegiate training. This class takes in, of course, the vast majority of our people, and forms the nucleus and staff of the Church in its lay element. They have the very best instincts, they have the faith, with that enlightenment which a thorough knowledge of the Catechism, together with a practical Christian life, can give them, and they glory in the name and profession of Catholicity. Yet, strange as it may seem, they are more in danger of going astray than

the class below or the class above them. It is difficult to keep in mind their excellences whilst pointing out their dangers; but it is necessary to point out the latter, not forgetting, though seeming to omit, the former.

Their ability to read is a great advantage, inasmuch as the spare hour and the wet day may be well spent in the company of a good book. It is a great blessing that education, even of the rudimentary sort, is nowadays brought within the reach of all, and that their status, both religiously and civilly, is likely to be thereby ameliorated.

This class of men formed, in the ages of faith, the bodyguard of the Church. They fought her battles, they recruited her cloisters. The thousands who followed the standards of the Crusaders came from these ranks, then, indeed, less instructed than they are now, but not the less enthusiastic. one great characteristic of this class is a thorough belief in the articles of their faith, and a willingness to fight for it. They may be sometimes remiss in the observance of its ordinances, their conduct may not bear the closest inspection from an ascetic eye; but their bravery, their enthusiasm, their heroic magnanimity is simply beyond praise. These are they who will shield the persecuted priest at the risk of their lives, who will share their day's labour or their slender pittance to raise an edifice to the Most High in the backwoods of Canada or the prairies of America. These men will gather from the ends of the world to fight and die in defence of the rights of the Father of Christendom, and trample the bribe of the proselytiser under their feet when starvation is facing them as an alternative.

Their reading enables them to go back to the ages of persecution, and examine the galling shackles which were invented to crush their forefathers; taking their fragments in their hands, a hatred of the legislature that forged them is set aglow in their manly hearts, and bursts forth into acts of reprisal and vengeance, which are sometimes called If some of the disabilities under which rebellion. their fathers groaned still exist, they are on fire until they be removed; and who can blame them if, smarting under a sense of injustice and a ban of servitude, they forget the coolness of the astute politician in the ardour with which they strive for political fairplay? A nation that would gain their affection-and justice will always gain it-would range on its side a host of generous hearts and willing hands, who would not be the less remiss in serving her in her hour of need from having gratitude to animate their efforts. A dominant race is slow to evoke the nobler dispositions of the conquered. To make their conquests the more secure, they crush, rob, spoliate the victims, and, having maddened them to excesses, increase their grounds for still further persecutions. All their instincts of faith, all their beloved doctrines, become thus deepened in their hearts and wedded to their lives, nay, become rooted in the very ground that drank the blood of the martyred. And that blood will not cease to cry to heaven, as it has done in Genesis, and as St. John saw it do in the Apocalypse, until justice is done both in this world and in the next. The faith of a people cannot be smothered in their blood, and no dogma inspired by the meek Lamb of God was ever propagated by the sword. Wherever persecution has prevailed, the great body of the faithful have become chastened and perfect; and wherever comfort and worldliness have been badges of the Church Militant, there faith has become weaker, and the practice of the higher virtues the exception rather than the rule.

There are two sources of danger to this class of people. One, and the more serious one, arises from their want of logical acumen, resulting in an impotence to discover the fallacy of a sophism; the other, in the very keenness of their instincts, which is disappointed in not finding the actual lives of others come up to the theories they have formed.

The first source has been very prolific of evils to the Church. A half-educated person is very apt to rush into arguments in defence of his tenets, without being properly disciplined in the manner of carrying them out. Arguments concerning religion are of the most difficult nature. If philosophers have all differed with regard to the conduct of the understanding in matters which fall under the province of unassisted reason, how much more are they liable to differ in matters which go beyond reason, or which require reason illumined by faith in order to understand their first principles! An undisciplined mind,

then, is very like young David with the armour of Saul; and it is the characteristic of these half-educated people that they will not lay aside the armour and take up their slings. They thus expose themselves to the danger of losing their faith. Objections to their favourite dogmas will be taken from the Bible; they may or may not see their way to an answer, but the objection is seldom satisfactorily answered, and when they argue still after being conquered, the original difficulty is sure to remain in their memory, creating a dissatisfaction with preconceived notions. It is useless to tell them or their opponents that the understanding of a text of Scripture, even literally, requires years of study, requires a knowledge of Hebrew, of Greek, of Latin, and of hermeneutics, far beyond the reach of an ordinarily educated man. They rush into the arena at once, and generally come out of the ordeal a little worsted. This grieves them, and their self-love will not be proof to strange intermixtures of the true and false. A little logic, a little philosophy, and a little theology would teach men how much they were ignorant of, and go a long way towards modifying presumption.

The evils of unsuccessful intellectual encounters are not so great, however, as those which arise from indiscriminate reading. The daily and weekly newspapers, which issue in their thousands from the printing-presses of the world, exercise a powerful sway over the thoughts and opinions of their readers. Those who are ignorant of the people who compose

leading articles are apt to look upon their productions as oracles. Every country reader does not get a peep behind the scenes enacted in Fleet-street and the Strand. They cannot see the sorry herd of scribblers, who, for a material competence, write off, at the dictation of an astute employer, those columns of leaded type which are to become the guides and thinking machines of numbers of our populace. 'I read in the Times, or the Standard, or the Daily Telegraph, an article which said so-and-so,' is about the length of the information of a great many upon some of the most important topics of the day. It is no wonder, therefore, that their knowledge is as crude and ill-digested as the source is from which it is acquired.

Newspapers have destroyed a great portion of the unthinking population of Europe. Newspapers incite to revolutions, false liberty, rights of labour, and Communism on the Continent; at home, they fall short of many extremes because their readers are not advanced enough to go with them. journal, however, that soars to a discussion upon mysteries and infallibility, and disdains not to give instructions about the growing of turnips or the cure of neuralgia, has a fair show of being omniscient. The gentleman who writes all these lucid pages, and strings together so many fine adjectives, for the instruction of those who can afford to pay a penny, and choose which is Daniel and which is the lion, must be a powerful genius indeed in the eyes of poor Hodge, who spells through his pages after his day's

The priest may preach and the schoollabours. master may teach; but neither of them can compose a daily paper. It is no wonder, then, that the halfeducated have been led away by the specious rhetoric and shallow logic of penny-a-liners, and that their belief in ancient and venerable forms of truth has been shaken. A learned man reads the telegrams and laughs at the thunder of the leading article; a half-educated man reads the telegrams also, and swears by the leader, if it be according to his ideas; and thinks there is something in it, because it is printed, if it differ from them. The people we are writing about are almost always led by the newspapers. They cannot think for themselves, and do not grudge a penny to the man who thinks for them. We sometimes blame Catholic newspapers for writing down to people's prejudices instead of elevating them; but we forget that newspapers are like Cheap John's razors, made to sell and not to shave. If, in the selling process, they can raise a mind or two here and there, they may look upon themselves as having done a good work; and if they stem the downward course of popular thought, their writing has not been in vain. Elevation is a difficult and thankless process; but facilis descensus Averni-it is very easy to drift with the stream, to write down what has a tendency to descend, and hence papers of this description soon attain the 'largest circulation in the world.'

No more insidious principle could be invented for the destruction of faith than the right of private judgment. A Catholic, no matter how shallow his education, knows that the use of private judgment is interdicted to him on those matters on which the Church has spoken authoritatively, maxim, In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas, looks very nice on paper, but it is liable to perversion. The liberty allowed in doubtful matters takes a large field to itself, and generally advances into conclusions drawn from the necessariis. An unthinking Catholic will love to assert his independence when he can, and show that he is not a He will adopt loose doctrines on toleration, certain principles of Liberalism, and, before he sees the drift of his principles, he may find himself at variance with the Church. Great men, like Lamennais, have done so, and ended by being sadly shipwrecked. If great men have gone astray thus, is it a wonder that pigmies in talent and culture should do the same? Well did the late Pope say that Liberal principles were the bane of our age.

This unthinking Catholic will begin his observations on things nearer home. He once admired the monk and cloistered nun. He has recommended himself to their prayers, and has reverenced their very garb. He can point to the ascetic life of the Church as the one grand evidence that sanctity has not died. He may answer rudely, yet wisely, to the objections which Protestants raise against a life of celibacy; but he is right in the main. We remember an answer once given by an unlettered woman to a Protestant neighbour. The latter de-

claimed against celibacy, and showed, as she easily could, that it was not admitted among the approved practices of her Church. She even quoted Scripture to show that a Bishop might be the husband of one wife. This was new to the poor Catholic, and when utterly silenced in argument, she exclaimed, 'Musha, glory be to God! but yours is a fine Church, indeed. If ye had your way, you'd let the poor Lamb of God wander through heaven by Himself, without a single virgin to follow Him.' The answer was curious, yet original and true.

The reading of short-sighted articles in newspapers, and the comments made upon them, often turn the tide of one's admiration into that of captious criticism. A defect here and there is put forward and made the most of; and if it gets magnified into a public scandal, an argument is drawn to the effect that the whole system is to be condemned. The very reverence one feels for clerical and religious life changes into something indefinable when spots are shown to exist upon a sun that once shone with such splendour. By degrees the reverence becomes less, and as corruptio optimi pessima, it happens that in many cases a violent opposition takes the place of former respect.

People who read a good deal, in a light off-hand way, begin to think that a fine old parish priest has no need of so much money. He has no wife and family to support, and what does he want fees for? He has a nice farm and a good house. People fail to see the need of his helping his relations. They

forget that his relations paid for his education, and often straitened themselves in order to enable him to reach the goal of his desires. They forget that he has to build schools, and perhaps churches. They will only see their own side of the question. Why spend so much on a church? Why spend so much on an opera or a theatre? Does not God deserve as much love as the devil, and has not He, who gives us all things, a right to as much as we squander upon folly and sin at least? Judas grudged the box of ointment poured on our Lord's feet; and it does not appear that he grudged any of the boxes Magdalen wasted on herself in the time of her sinfulness. However, this shallow reasoning goes on, and by degrees undermines the edifice of faith. educated have fine conceptions of the nature of evangelical poverty and self-abnegation; but wishing all to be perfect except oneself is very like the piety of Julian the Apostate, who took away the property of the Christians that he might, as he said, give them an opportunity of following in the footsteps of their Divine Master. Julian the Apostate has got many followers in Italy, Spain, and France: let us hope that his practical Gospel has ceased to spread, like the doctrines of the Reformation with the ruins caused by their first conquests.

### CHAPTER VI.

#### THE HALF-EDUCATED OUTSIDE THE FOLD.

It is a very difficult thing for a Catholic to look without passion upon the half-educated outside the Church, and still more difficult to judge calmly of their state. Yet, to understand them properly, we must divest ourselves of personal prejudices, and, as far as possible, of the antipathy which their sayings and deeds have caused in us towards them.

The half-educated Protestant is a singular phenomenon. He looks upon everything Catholic as a most damnable and horrible, soul-destroying, liberty-extinguishing monster. Men who have never read a Catholic book, never spoken to a Catholic priest, never entered a Catholic church, never assisted at a Catholic service, have the most extravagant notions about all those things, of which, in the ordinary course of events, they should know nothing whatever. How is this? In endeavouring to give an explanation of the anomaly, we may possibly light upon something which will persuade us to be more charitable.

The authors of the Reformation had to contend with the instinct of faith in those who were to be perverted. It was not enough for their crafty designs that defects were known to exist in the Church, and made the most of in the work of destruction; it was necessary that odium should be brought upon what

was formerly reverenced, and hatred generated against what was formerly loved. There is nothing can create such a reversion of feeling in the mind as the detection of an impostor. When we have trusted, honoured, loved, and benefited a man, we have an interest in him, and like to see him render himself worthy of our beneficence. We hear rumours about his dishonesty, but we soon find out how groundless they were. We are pressed with new discoveries; we attribute them to the arts and machinations of enemies. We have proof upon proof brought to us of his worthlessness; we still stand by him, for it is hard to break an idol, especially if it be one of our own setting up, and one in which we have believed through good and evil report. But at length the denudation comes. He is unmistakably proved before us to be an arrant knave, to have deceived. cajoled, injured, betrayed, and maligned us. What can we do? The thing is spurned from our presence, shattered and splintered, detested and abominated. Why did we allow ourselves to be deceived so long? We will be cautious again, and never shall impostors dupe us for the future.

It was this knowledge of human nature which enabled the Reformers to do their work so thoroughly. It was not enough to find fault with the Church. She must be proved to be unscriptural, immoral, idolatrous, and foretold under all the ugly figures that can be painted from the visions of St. John. They set to work in right good earnest. They began, of course, at the central point. The adora-

tion of our Lord in the Host was idolatry. See how idolatry has been condemned throughout the whole Bible! What is more dreadful? And then the idolatry did not stop here. Look at all the gods and goddesses of wood and plaster, of stone and bronze, that are to be seen in the temples of the living God. Yea, even on the outside. The very waterspouts of the roofs of their churches must be ornamented with idols as hideous as any that can be found in China or Japan! To the work, my brave people. Take up the matlock and the axe. Take up the firebrand and the crowbar. Cut, hack, hew, break, and destroy those emblems of idolatry. Purge the temple of the living God of all their Dagons and images of Moloch or Baal, and having whitewashed the walls which remain, let us raise a self-ordained minister in a large elevated tub to teach us the truths of Christianity, and worship his word for the idols we have destroyed, and feed his wife and children instead of those monks who chiselled and ornamented in their laziness the emblems we have set ablaze. So spoke the iconoclasts of the sixth century, and so spoke the John Knoxes of the sixteenth. teachers of the people began to demoralise them after this manner.

That there were abuses in the Church at all times, no one ever denied who did not deny that the component parts of her were human beings. It was easy enough to attribute those abuses to her system, instead of showing that they existed in spite of her discipline. The abuses were palpable, but the doc-

trines were spiritual, and it was very easy to attribute the abuses to a wrong source. The step from one lie to another is very easy. When the Church was guilty of idolatry, what might she not be guilty Her Sacraments were human things invented to fatten her clergy, and her clergy were impostors, who throve upon the ignorance and superstition of her people. The Pope fell in for his share of bad names, and his indulgences were cursed and for-It was said that priests were paid for forgiving sins; and when that accusation was found not to be true, the confessional was denounced as a sink of immorality. The honour paid to the Saints was so much taken from God, and purgatory was the invention of priestcraft. One after another was everything Catholics hold sacred maligned, held up for exe-

Yes, one will say, this could account very well for the Reformation times, and the tide that set in against Catholic doctrines and customs at that moment; but how can the present bitterness of non-Catholics be accounted for? There are two ways of accounting for that. First, the traditions of aftergenerations. Parents told their children, and these told theirs, of the struggles their fathers had to wage against Popery; the battles fought and the contests engaged in against this enemy of true religion were handed down in books, talked of in schools, sung of in ballads, and remembered in monuments. Secondly, ministers who had no positive doctrines to assert or defend, and whose main creed consisted in negations,

had to learn what were the truths they were obliged to deny before being qualified for the pulpit, and considered it their duty to din those denials into their people's ears Sunday after Sunday. The tradition would have died away if it had not been perpetuated by oral teaching.

Thus came the minds of the populace to be indoctrinated with false impressions regarding the Catholic Where Protestantism pure and simple had Church. its sway their ideas were, more or less, belonging to a thing dead and gone; but as soon as a Catholic congregation began to spring into existence, on the ground once consecrated to its worship-and where Catholic anthems had long been silent—to live once more a Catholic life, all the virulence which seemed to have slept burst forth with renewed vigour. books were ransacked, storms were brewed in the pulpit, and the Gentiles raged against the Lord and His Anointed. The coexistence of the two congregations caused these noises to be perpetuated, until at length they found vent in rows and contentions of a most unapostolic nature.

We are apt to look upon these contentions as barbarous, and the parties engaged in them as wanting in civilisation. To a certain extent that has the appearance of truth; but when the thing is examined philosophically, putting aside the mode of warfare, the strifes are very much to the credit of their faith.

> 'By apostolic blows and knocks To prove our doctrines orthodox,'

is a sign of earnestness which it is not well to despise.

It shows that the people are in earnest, and that what they believe is not for them merely a Sunday garb, but a dress of every-day life. The great fault of our age is indifferentism. Our forefathers fought for their faith; and if they put heretics to death, it was because they thought them enemies of Church and State. If a man does not keep faith with his God, how can he keep it with man? they argued; and on this principle the Inquisition punished heretics, and even John Wesley preached intolerance. When a man is indifferent about his faith, he does not care whether his neighbour asserts it or denies it. The odium theologicum, therefore, has some reason on its side, much as we may condemn its work.

Let us now look at the matter from the combatants' point of view. A Belfast Orangeman has generally very little faith of any kind. He earns his wages, gets drunk on a portion of it on Saturday night, and sleeps till after church-time on Sunday. He is, however, filled with vague notions of civil and religious liberty, which to him means that, a couple of hundred years ago, a certain King William gained all his liberty for him by conquering the Papists at the battle of the Boyne. He grows up with the idea that these Papists are terrible fellows, who worship idols, and get leave from their priests to murder Orangemen at certain times. Civil and religious liberty, therefore, means to him that said Papist is to be trampled on and crushed, otherwise there is no prosperity for Ireland; and forthwith he raises his flag, marches to the sound of fife and drum, imagining

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that the mud of the streets is Papists' blood, and that every blow he gives his drumhead has some reference to Papist brains. These ideas madden him. and he drums and drums until the blood squirts out at his finger-ends.

Divesting this proceeding of its ferocity, what do we find beneath it? We find the instinct of faith perverted to a wrong channel. If all that parsons preach about Catholics and all that is printed in Exeter Hall books about them be true, is it not the part of a good Christian to exterminate them? Protestant animosity is simply zeal in the wrong place. Remove these prejudices—though hic opus hic labor—and you will find a very fine earnest disposition left behind.

As was remarked before, the half-educated, either inside or outside the Church, know not how to reason. Sophisms stand them instead of arguments. What they are once led to believe forms a part of their nature, and they are ready to assert it after their own fashion, and fight for it if need be. They know of no middle way. They understand not 'live and let live.' They are a body of splendid material, ready for the popular leader or the pulpit orator, to be led to carry into execution the conclusions to which they are incited.

All the followers of heresiarchs were of this stamp. The Lollards were under the impression that they were doing the work of God; the Cromwellians thought that they were only destroying so many Canaanites when they exterminated Papists; the

sans culottes of the French Revolution thought they were asserting liberty, equality, fraternity; the modern Garibaldians marched to Rome, thinking they were going to save the Pope from the Jesuits; and the Communists of Paris thought they were taking to themselves the taxes that had been levied off them to pamper tyranny, and that in burning the Tuileries and pulling down the Obelisk they only obliterated the traces of the hated Empire. These may seem charitable interpretations of indefensible Vandalism; but one is loth to condemn human nature for the actions done in the heat of excitement and under the influence of a false teaching.

## CHAPTER VII.

## EDUCATED CATHOLICS.

A WELL-EDUCATED Catholic is the beau idéal of a perfect gentleman; he has the advantage of all the secular learning that it is possible for a man to acquire. The Church has always encouraged a full course of secular education. She disowns nothing, condemns nothing that can add to the dignity of human nature. In fact, her best scholars and most gifted writers have been priests, who learned everything they knew at her feet, and consecrated the great gifts wherewith they were endowed to her service. Moreover, they learn in her higher studies

what can consecrate and elevate whatever they have acquired in her lower schools, and the addition of the supernatural adds lustre to their natural acquire-When she sends forth her pupils to travel in the domains of science, she wishes them to keep before their mind's eye the end of their creation. is careful to let them know that the knowledge they can amass of earthly things is not intended merely for this world; but that, after raising them in the intellectual sphere, it means to prepare them for even a higher place in the estimation of Heaven than they can ever gain in that of men. The wonders of Nature are meant only as steps to lead to the knowledge of the Creator, and the highest excellence in earthly learning is but a small thing compared to the lowest in the scale of sanctity. Sanctity and learning are not two distinct things in the Church; one helps the other. A Saint distinguished for learning is also a doctor in the grades of her canonisation. Learning without piety she always suspects. Indeed it is one of the traditions of her ascetic school that those who are gifted with great talents and acquire great knowledge, if they be not pious and humble, generally fall down to the lowest of sins, which is impurity.

From the learned portion of her children have sprung the brightest ornaments of the Church. The full knowledge which a long course of study imparts produces the clearness of mind which can balance the contending emotions and prospects which bid for a man's future career. You rarely find a

thoroughly educated Catholic a bad or indifferent one. He knows the genius and mind of the Church, he sees her beauty, he admires her moral and ascetic systems, and he longs to be one with her in all things. If he find in himself the spirit of a vocation, he generally joins the ranks of her hierarchy, or becomes a member of one of her religious Orders; and if he perceive not the divine call, he remains in some worldly profession, to be a light, by his example, amongst her laymen.

Before casting a glance upon the history of her learned men in days gone by, it would be well to look about us at her children now living. It is not well to mention names, though it is very hard to resist the temptation when speaking of the living; but it is easy enough to give hints that may prove our point. Confining ourselves, then, to these kingdoms, there is ample proof of our assertion that the learned laymen of the Catholic Church are a bright ornament to it. We put aside the ecclesiastics, as they are bound in honour to follow the rules of their profession.

In the ranks of our Catholic noblemen there is not one to be found who is not, first and foremost, a Catholic, and proud of belonging to his ancient and glorious Church. His voice in the senate or in public meetings is raised in her honour, and his purse and his energies are freely at her service. It may be remarked also, as a corollary, that in Germany, in Belgium, in France, in Italy, in Spain and Portugal, where there are movements against the Church, we

find none of the nobles amongst the ranks of her enemies, but everywhere we find them amongst her warmest advocates. There may be an exception in the higher ranks of royal houses; but the chance of a crown or its precarious possession has a tendency in modern times to make royal minions be the puppets of their Ministers. If we come to the squires and members of Parliament of these kingdoms, we find the same thorough devotion to the interests of the Church. They plead, they strive, they make sacrifices, and show to the world a splendid front of If the same cannot be said devotion and courage. of continental personages in their position, it is because they have not the happiness of living under a settled constitution like ours, and have to trim their sails to reach a future in which they may possibly assert their faith and Christianity. Another consideration will help us in giving a reason for the indifference of continental Catholic members of legislative bodies. They are Catholics by baptism, but infidels by profession.

If we come to the legal profession, we find the same beautiful testimony to the grand attraction of the Catholic Church for talent and forensic ability. To say that our Catholic judges are exemplary in their morals would be to utter a pleonasm. There was but one judge (now, indeed, no more) who was a bad Catholic, and the world groans yet, even after his death, beneath the scandal he has given. The medical profession gives us some of the best practical Christians we have; but there are a few who,

perhaps, could not find a soul in the dissection of a human body, and therefore came to the conclusion that they have not one themselves. We pity these men, and hope that they will find out a soul before their lives are dissected in the next world. went through the army, the navy, the higher positions of civil life, we should find the same spirit animated our thoroughly educated men. It is a consolation to look at the state of Catholicity in these kingdoms as exemplified in the lives of our higher classes and their families. Most of them have given members to our cloisters, male and female, and all their young olive-branches are trained in the atmosphere of the best Catholic schools. In fact, the hopes of the Church's resuscitation here in England rest, to a great extent, upon them.

In the domain of letters it is not easy to make a comparison between Catholics and others. Books must be judged by the matters they treat on, and not by the religion of their authors. Genius has no rules by which it is to be guided, and if not left to its own exuberance it becomes a dwarfed thing. All that can be done in the comparison between genius and genius is to take specimens in as far as they may be considered types of their respective religious professions. Dante is a good specimen of a Catholic genius and poet, and Milton no one will object to as a representative genius of Protestantism. Both wrote upon a supernatural theme, and both have gained the applause and reverence, not only of their respective coreligionists, but of the world.

In instituting a comparison between the two, we shall confine ourselves to the moral effect of their respective poems.

Dante, in his Inferno, gives a most graphic description of the punishment of sin. He assigns to each infraction of God's commandments a most terrible penalty. He spares neither age or sex, churchman or layman, and he deals condign punishment to all. Milton considers sin rather as a misfortune, and, in giving the punishments which it entails, ennobles the perpetrator and excuses his fall. Dante makes Lucifer a horrid repulsive beast, disgusting to contemplate, the incarnation of meanness and depravity. Milton makes Lucifer a hero. is a fine mind, noble in sentiment, a martyr to private judgment, and to be pitied rather than detested. inasmuch as God was too powerful for him, and could punish him so severely. Every one reading Milton will pity, if he does not admire, the devil; every one reading Dante will turn from the devil and his three protuberances of Judas, Brutus, and Cassio in thorough disgust. Fancy a comparison between the speech in pandemonium and the climbing on the coarse and jagged beard out of the deepest deep of Dante.

Milton has nothing about purgatory, as in duty bound, and so there can be no comparison here between himself and Dante. It is rather hard to make a comparison between the two in their description of heaven. The cold Calvinism of Milton makes God a tyrant to be dreaded; the sweet lovingness of the

Saints, of which Beatrice is a type in Dante, makes Him a benevolent Being to be loved. Dante is at home in heaven, by the help of Catholic theology, and his grand finish of the *Paradiso* is beyond comparison. As he ascends with his guide from sphere to sphere, the reader is curious as to how he can come down. He carries you up to the highest point which reason, faith, and imagination can reach in contemplating the Divinity, and then, by an admirable stroke of genius, his book comes to an end. That Milton fails in his poetic description of heaven is to be expected. His school of theology thought more of hell; and hence he has made it a place where a person could go on an excursion, if it were not for the danger of not being able to get back.

Dante was thoroughly versed in all the sciences and arts of his age; so was Milton. They are both specimens of first-rate scholars, as well as first-rate poets and first-rate geniuses. Had Milton been a Catholic his poem would have been, as Dante's is, a thing always read and always commented on. As it is, we may fairly offer, with Dr. Johnson, a premium to any one who read it a second time.

Thus an attempt has been made to show that the Catholic Church not only encourages education of a superior order, but in addition inspires the theme and ennobles the conception and diction of one who is a faithful follower of her precepts.

There are dangers besetting the paths of the student of the higher studies in the Catholic Church, which it is our duty to advert to. We are very fax from thinking that because a man is a Catholic he is therefore better than every other man of a different religious persuasion. No; we know and believe that young men, notwithstanding the Sacrament of Regeneration, are very much the same at certain stages of life, cateris paribus. A young student in a Catholic college has his passions to subdue, his talents to cultivate, and his tasks to learn, like all others. He has, of course, special spiritual as well as the ordinary temporal aids for all these, and therein has the advantage over his Protestant neighbour. But you 'cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear;' and if a student enters college either lazy or stupid, the best professors in the world cannot turn him out an accomplished scholar. Students of the 'ne'er-do-weel' description are generally the sons of men who have made money, and want to make their sons gentlemen. For this, of course, the parents are to be applauded, and very often they are rewarded by having their expectations realised. In many cases, however, they frustrate their own designs. Their sons are crammed with pocket-money and parental indulgence; and we need not observe that these are great obstacles in the way of being crammed with learning and piety. The youngsters do not see the use of learning. Like Tony Lumpkin, they do not see that it requires much learning to be able to spend 500l. a year. They flourish, therefore, in the best uniforms for boating and cricket, and are distinguished by the ornaments of their rooms and the costliness of their wardrobe. As for learning,

why, they get through their lessons in a stupid way, get scolded, if not chastised, by their masters, and go out on vacation with a secret spite against their professors, who fall in their estimation because they are not as rich as themselves. These men grow up to be squires by and by, as a grub grows to be a butterfly, and they have a sly intention of being revenged upon the Church on all occasions, which their position allows them, for the severity with which clergymen tried to make something of them when at college. Elections and public meetings bring forth their latent energies, and the newspapers make fools of themselves in praising their independence. These men could be conveniently passed by as specimens of superior education; but it is well to point them out as a warning to others. They never do much good. If they do not get married soon they take to immorality, and end by squandering in debauchery what their fathers scraped together by industry and economy.

There is another class—very rare indeed in Catholic colleges in these countries—who imbibe Liberal ideas, and by their very cleverness are able to see half-way through a deep sophism. These are the men who take honours in college and study with diligence and success. Nature has gifted them with fine talents, and their conduct and success in studies gain them the respect of their companions and the consideration, if not love, of their superiors. They are looked upon very often as the future hope of the establishment, and as men likely to confer honour,

not only upon their alma mater, but upon the Church to which they belong. In an evil hour they imbibe strange maxims; either a companion or a stray book or a vacation adventure brings new ideas into their They become advanced Liberals of the heads. scholastic type; and though they do not commit flagrant violations of rule, they envy the young men of Oxford, Cambridge, and Trinity, who can take such liberties with college restrictions, and detail to them their performances during their idle times at home. These begin to feel the power that is in them, and long for an opportunity of displaying their courage and independence. These tendencies often bring them to minimise portions of the Church's teaching, but they seldom urge them to a denial of their faith. It is a singular fact, that for the last hundred years there is no record of a single welleducated and well-conducted Catholic becoming a Protestant, a fortiori of one who has made any sacrifice of position or family for adopting the tenets of the Reformation; whereas there have been a great many splendid examples of the contrary.

There is, however, one class of well-educated men who are in danger of losing their faith. These are libertines; men who think the laws of the Church are too strict, and who wish for a little more liberty to do evil. They will, perhaps, seek for a dispensation for a mixed marriage; and, not getting it as easily as they expected, go over to the other side. Dux famina facti. We do not regret the loss of such people, for the Church is well rid of them, and

they cannot be much of an ornament to the sect they join under such motives. The instinct of faith, then, is, on the whole, in its full perfection in the educated Catholic of these countries. How it fares in those of the Continent is foreign to our present purpose.

### CHAPTER VIII.

### THE EDUCATED NON-CATHOLIC.

YOUTH left to its own instincts and taste is apt to go astray after vain and senseless objects; but youth under any fixed system of training is sure to light upon what will be afterwards profitable. In non-Catholic schools there is a great deal of the Catholic spirit still left. The universities and public schools of England were founded in the main by Catholics, or inspired by Catholic traditions. A godless system of education was the invention of recent times, and the scholars it has formed are scarcely worthy of notice.

It is impossible to pass through Oxford, examine its colleges, its libraries, and listen to its traditions, without feeling that a Catholic spirit somehow hovers about the place. The results of its teaching have been diverse in latter days. Some went off towards Rome, and some others towards infidelity. The least talented and the least learned have stuck in the mud of Protestantism, and flounder there to

the end of their lives. Most attribute the extremes to which the thinking portion of university students tend to the revival of scholastic teaching, and the logical training given thereby to the mind. However it may be, the facts stand out bold before us, and Oxford has done more for the Catholic Church than any other university.

When young men, in the prime of youthful manhood, become dissatisfied with a learning that has merely utility for its object, it is a good sign. The mind is not satisfied with the construction of a steamengine or the reduction of taxes. These are fine things in their way, but the noble minds of a country like to see their premiers translating Homer, and their judges publishing works about the eternal interests of the soul. Oxford made Gibbon a Catholic, and Lausanne made him an infidel.

Genius, as a rule, has a Catholic spirit, and without Catholic ideas the fire of genius can scarcely burn so as to give out its proper light.

Poetry may be taken as the sphere of genius, at least that element in which genius can roam at will, and give out its scintillations without control. Taking the poets of England, from the first to the latest, we find an immense quantity of Catholic spirit and ideas in their verses. Putting aside those who were Catholics, such as Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Dryden, and Pope, we find even in the modern poets that their themes are worthy of them only when they treat of Catholic subjects. Byron is greatest in his Childe Harold, Goldsmith is loveliest in his Edwin

and Angelina, Tennyson is grandest in his Holy Grail, and Longfellow is happiest in his Evangeline.

As for the prose writers of fiction, it is a healthy transition to pass from the ugly realities of Smollett or Fielding to the chaste and beautiful romances of Sir Walter Scott: and where is Scott finest? In his Ivanhoe, his Betrothed, his Abbot, and his Monastery. His Bride of Lammermoor, with all its sadness, is also a Catholic story. It needed Catholicity to give him a theme for his romance, and it is supposed that the charm which he cast over Catholic incidents was the first blow in breaking down the prejudices which Protestants had drunk in with their mothers' milk against the Church of their forefathers.

Historians, in tracing the progress of human events, found the portion of them in which Catholics figured the most entertaining, inasmuch as Catholics fought for principle, and the others for self-interest. A student who takes up the works of our best modern writers cannot fail to see a special mark of the Catholic Church manifested in what he reads. She is always persecuted, yet always outlives persecution; always doomed, yet destined not to die. That thinking minds should thus be led to admire her was natural; admiring her, they must examine her claims to respect; having examined those, they must see their cogency; having seen those, they must adhere to them, and finally become incorporated with her.

People sometimes wonder when they see the list of those who have joined the Catholic Church

within the last forty or fifty years, but the wonder really is that the number is so small. Take away prejudice, and the innate sense of fairplay will at once bring home to a candid mind the paramount claims of the Catholic Church to its allegiance. Many gifted minds outside the Church take up special lines of study, one botany, another geology, another pagan classics, another mathematics or physics. They find plenty of occupation in their pursuits, and their minds are so engrossed by them that they leave every other study aside. These remain where they are, and to many, perhaps, matters of belief are more or less a secondary concern. If, however, they turn the same acute reasoning which guides their natural researches to the concerns of the soul, we soon see the Church enriched by an additional gifted member. Some of the best, the noblest, the most cultivated, and most self-sacrificing members of the Catholic Church in this kingdom are those who have found their way out of heresy to the light of faith. Many there are, still not of the true fold, who have pointed out the way, and have not yet received the grace or the courage to follow the example of their quondam disciples. The seeds of Catholicity are yet buried in the English soil, they are in her civil laws and in her long-lived institutions. Years of heresy have only hidden them for a time. They sprout up in most unexpected and unlooked-for places, as grace shines upon them, and warms them into ani-There is a grand Catholic spirit stirring in the country, and bringing forth shoots and flowers

and fruits ahundredfold every day. A spirit of inquiry is awakened by every new conversion, and for every one which figures in a newspaper paragraph, hundreds are received of whom the outside world is in complete ignorance. The work is progressing. A dark cloud was cast over this land at the time of the Reformation, when Catholic verities seemed to die; but it is clearing away by degrees, the horizon is brightening, and the Sun of truth and justice will, in His own good time, shine bright and glorious over this land. There is no instance in ecclesiastical history of a return to the bosom of unity from heresy and schism so graceful, so satisfactory as that of the conversion of England.

Whilst, however, we rejoice over the many splendid and well-cultured minds which are every day blessed with the light of Catholic faith, we must not forget the thousands who are going away from the supernatural altogether.

Heresy has within itself the principle of dissolution. Granting that private judgment, and not an infallible speaking authority, is the rule of faith, what are we to expect? Faith presents difficulties at every step, the scheme of redemption presents the same, and the ways of Providence are inscrutable. No human mind, be it ever so gifted naturally, can cleave out for itself a sure and agreeable way of salvation amid so many conflicting opinions which are daily asserted as the principles of true religion. The process of striving for truth becomes irksome and disagreeable. Difficulties meet a man

at every turn—difficulties from revealed and from unrevealed religion. At length, wearied with the struggle, the sceking soul flings all away, and abandons itself to its own lights, aided simply by the phenomena it observes in the world. Deism finds its expression in pantheism, positivism, and other undefinable isms, and the soul sometimes, in its agony, gets rid of the idea of a Supreme Being altogether, and sinks into atheism.

To think of eternity at all is a hopeful sign of life, even when a man is overwhelmed by the difficulties he encounters. Although Cicero says that no one ever disbelieved in a God, except he feared there might be one to punish him, yet it is to be hoped that many are sincere in their unbelief, and that, as some sin or series of rejected graces stand in the way of a light from heaven, their path may be brightened some day by the prayers of their friends, moving the Almighty to grant still one other mercy that may lift such gifted beings from the darkness that surrounds them, and bring them to the neverdying light of the true faith.

# CHAPTER IX.

#### NATURAL GOODNESS NOT FAITH.

THERE is a great deal of goodness to be found in the world, mixed up, indeed, with sins and imperfections in many, but pure and lovely for its own sake in several. It is against Catholic doctrine to state, or even to think, that the acts of infidels and unbelievers are sins; it is equally against it to say that they merit grace.

When we see a king or governor of a nation inclined, for the benefit of his people, to reward excellence and to punish misdeeds; when he holds the scales of human justice evenly balanced, who can say but that he is good? If his justice be tempered by mercy, and if the tear of human compassion is shed over the carrying into execution of a just law, is not that goodness still more enhanced, and does it not put the cruelty of many Christian rulers in the shade? He may be otherwise given to obscenity and low vices; he may gratify his human passions at the expense of the happiness of others; but these evils do not obliterate his goodness: they but serve as a background to cast it out into bolder The good actions are not made evil by his bad ones; and his imperfections, though somewhat more pardonable, are not at all improved by his natural good acts. The pagan Titus, who sighed that he had lost a day, may be a model to many a Christian; and kings with the light of Christianity may find a severer judgment awarded to them than did Nero. To assert that faith makes everything good, and its absence everything done evil, is a huge error, both against common sense and common Christianity.

Public men, who advocate in the senate or councils of their nation the rights of the poor, and who

labour at making good laws for the commonwealth, in so far do good. What nobler office can there be, even for a Christian, than that of conferring favours upon the human race? Philanthropists are always admired, no matter how their motives may be interpreted. Some are naturally kind, and cannot find anything so agreeable as that of conferring blessings, whether in the way of laws or of charitable gifts or bequests. Must these be considered bad? God forbid! Would that the world had many more of such beings!

There is scarcely a country which cannot point to some pagan philosopher or other, who made her laws, or left moral precepts which are not yet forgotten. Zoroaster, Confucius, and other Easterns are still as much honoured, if not more, than Solon and Lycurgus among the Westerns. The laws of ancient Rome had many things to be admired, and those who made them, and caused them to be observed, were certainly benefactors. We all know these had not faith, and that their goodness must have proceeded from the innate spirit of justice, or that light which is given to every man who is born into the world. The Brehon laws of ancient Ireland were so merciful and excellent, that St. Patrick adopted them for the civil law of the country with very few modifications. The same may be said of many of the principles of old Roman jurisprudence, which became the foundation of the Code of Justinian, and still form the bulk of the common law of England. human heart, of itself, is not so bad as some suppose.

Only those who cast away faith or pervert its principles are guilty of passing laws and carrying them into execution, which would make Buddhist legislators cry shame upon them. The principles and laws of the French Revolution were not the offspring of human thought; we must consider them as inspired by the evil one.

In this age of business and enterprise there are many who have become benefactors of the human race, and have done great good in their day. who invented the steam-engine and telegraph, and who perfected both as means of intercommunication, have laid the whole civilised world under a debt of obligation. The celerity and safety with which not only ideas, but people and things, may be carried around the world and up and down the world at present, is a boon never dreamt of by former thinkers. We can now speak to our friends at the end of the world; time and space seem to be on the brink of annihilation; and every day shows us some gifted son of Adam wringing a secret from Nature that is destined to add considerably to the bulk of human happiness. Every hillside and valley, every mountain and stream, is utilised; life, existence, intelligence are all nurtured, improved, expanded. fort in the meanest dwellings; the great fount of charity which flows plentifully to soothe the sores and troubles caused by a catastrophe or accident, and which seems never to be exhausted; the spread of education, and with it the elevation of talent to its befitting position—all these are blessings for

which we must be grateful, and let us give credit to the goodness which prompts them and carries them into the ameliorating of our lives.

There is a humanising influence abroad also which does away with the brutalities of warfare; and that strange creation of our days, public opinion, has an excellent influence over the destinies of men. We must not close our eyes to the benefits accruing from mob-law and the power of majorities, even whilst we object to the principle on which they are founded. The opinion of large bodies of human educated beings is worthy of consideration; and although a faction shout may sometimes carry it to unlooked-for extremes, it is sure to recoil upon itself after its maddened excess, and sit in sackcloth and ashes on the road to its rectification. world is, of course, full of pessimists; but it is a question whether they or the optimists do more harm. Pessimist and optimist, freethinker and conservative, can join hands over a great work, which is going on through its checks and hindrances in this strange world of ours; and no one lives to the age of threescore and ten who does not find the world, on the whole, better arranged at his departure out of it than it was at his coming into it. There is a great deal here to be thankful for; and amid all the faults and flaws, mistakes and mismanagements, which surge around us on every side and meet our vision in the morning papers, we may say of progress after all, Eppur si muove.

The great defect of human goodness, apart from

the supernatural, is that it looks to generalities, and talks about humanity as if it were an abstract thing. To overlook the object of pity that suffers Lazaruslike at your door, and cast grand ideas abroad amongst the suffering nations, is a very mistaken sort of philanthropy. That there are some who soothe their consciences with vague notions of goodness when concrete occasions for its private exercise present themselves, it is useless to deny; but indeed they are the exceptions, and not the rule. inventors, and great engineers, and ship-builders, and railway contractors all feather their own nests whilst conferring blessings upon others, is but right and just. One ought to live, and live well, by the altar on which his talents are offered in the natural order, as well as does he who has a scriptural warrant for doing so in the spiritual. This does not detract from their goodness, however, for it is forbidden to muzzle the mouth of the ox which treads But even granting all this, granting out the corn. the general goodness there is in the world, and the special benefits derived from general benefactions as balancing them to a certain extent, perhaps it is well to come down a little lower, and see if there be not a great deal of private goodness ornamenting the world.

There is one species of private goodness recommended by our Lord—in not letting the right hand see what the left hand gives—which is pretty nearly extinct. We hear sometimes of a large sum dropped in a poor-box, and we hear also of poor people who are relieved by persons they do not know; but these cases are barely sufficient to prove that charity of the purest and gentlest kind is not yet extinct.

Private charities nowadays consist chiefly in founding refuges, penitentiaries, orphanages, and asylums. Sometimes they are the work of a charitable rich person, sometimes they are got up by subscriptions, and sometimes they are the work of devoted servants of God, who give their lives, as well as their substance, to their maintenance. get noised abroad because of their very nature, and the reward of charity is in no fear of being lost, and they never benefit the self-sacrificing people who found or support them. Even governments sometimes feel an impulse of charity, and will not let the private benefactors of the poor run away with all the merit. They also found institutions; but it is sad to have to confess that the greater part of government donations generally go to pamper the officials who are paid to keep the poor and wretched from absolute starvation.

Patrons of schools and associations often do a great deal in a gentle quiet way in helping struggling talent and rewarding growing merit. The brothers Cheeryble may yet be found in out-of-theway places helping the Linkinwaters and Chuzzlewits to their proper place in society, and diffusing blessings around them in an off-hand unconscious spirit and with real genuine goodness. Merchants and tradesmen are often charitable and generous to their employés, clerks and petty officers are generous

and kind to one another; but there is one sphere in which goodness is exercised and overlooked, and that is among the very poor. Any one whose duties bring him amongst the poor cannot help being edified and instructed by what he sees doing around The child of the poor, perhaps unfortunate, woman, who must toil in a factory for her daily bread, is kindly nursed and cared for by her decrepit or disabled neighbour. When one is out of work how kindly will the others who live near share their poor pittance with him! We need not allude to the lending of shawls and boots to enable each other to attend the service of God on Sundays; the poor but kindly hearth, which is always open to the child of want and poverty; the patience with which the brutalities of drunken husbands are borne and the gentle charity that has always a kind word for the unfortunate, and thanks God in the severe trials of life. We have seen families starving, with their last article, not only of superfluity, but of sheer necessity, pawned to keep in life the poor members, who gather shivering around a fireless grate, and who felt humiliated because charity was thrust upon them in the kindest and most considerate manner. Yea, in the very depths of depravity, in dens of vice and wickedness, human nature is yet living, and the flickering rays of goodness which sometimes shine forth out of very sin itself show that we are not yet to despair of man's elevation to his proper position for heaven.

All this goodness, however, can exist without

faith. It is sad to see it grovelling upon the earth, when it could be all spiritualised and made worthy of heaven. Deeds of goodness, to be worthy of an eternal reward, must be done in faith, animated by charity, must be done in sanctifying grace. Alas, we are a long way from that yet. We must wade through many by-paths, and trace the tortuous course of many helping graces, before we come to the light of faith at all; and even then a long way has to be travelled before we arrive at what the Church recognises as good works worthy of an eternal recompense.

There is no more dangerous fallacy in the world than that which is induced by the contemplation of good outside the Church. We have rested so long upon the theme that readers may not suppose us to ignore it, but, on the contrary, be aware that it is as fully and as carefully considered as possible. The fallacy tells in two ways upon an unreasoning mind. First, I see goodness everywhere, and those who are good cannot be wrong:

'For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight; His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.' *Pope*.

Their goodness is not wrong: on the contrary, it is better for its being where it is, but it does not advance them towards heaven. A man may walk all his life round and round a hill, but he never will reach its summit unless he climbs its side. It is one thing for an action to be good in itself, another thing to be good so as to merit heaven. Secondly, one

will say, 'I see a great deal of charity among Quakers, Jews, and other non-believers, and I see a great deal of depravity, chicanery, roguery, theft, and lying amongst those people who are supposed to have faith, and perhaps occasional good works I would rather pass through the world a respectable Quaker than go through as a negligent scandalous Catholic, and have a priest to give me a shove towards heaven at my deathbed.' Quaker has done better in this life undoubtedly; but we must not shorten the merciful arm which was stretched out to the thief from the Cross for all that. We do not say that the Quaker did ill; but how much better might he not have done were he animated by faith! An abuse of a system is no argument against it. One who has spent his life in violating the commandments of God and the precepts of his Church is no specimen of the Church's teaching-it can only be said of him that if the check of Church teaching were not upon him he would have been far worse than he was. His conscience must have pricked him continually if its voice was not completely silenced, and his outward and inward miseries were punishments enough for the wretchedness of his life. However, this matter will be considered more at length in the next chapter.

### CHAPTER X.

#### FAITH WITHOUT WORKS.

Philosophers have agitated and reasoned to find out the final cause of human actions. Some placed it in the benefit of the majority, some in the social contract, some in the satisfaction of doing good, and some in theories they neither understood themselves nor could make others understand. Public and private utility are often more furthered by crimes than they are by virtue, for unjust wars have often made nations great, and questionable practices often amass private wealth. No final cause can affect man's conscience or make him refrain from deeds that benefit himself, even if they hurt others, except the one of being accountable to a Supreme Being who will reward and punish after this life. Acts of Parliament, police and prisons, even the dread of the scaffold, if they succeed in a few instances in restraining the hand from crime, can never affect the conscience which is only deterred from evildoing by the fear of detection. The belief in a God, in His rewarding and punishing, and in a future life is at the foundation of all goodness in this world. lic faith requires more.

There are two ways in which even this belief has been made the occasion of harm: one, laid down by those who consider faith without good works sufficient for salvation; the other, by those who, believing in the necessity of good works, are swayed by their passions and forget the end of their existence.

In the first category are those who put aside the merit of good works towards salvation. 'Believe and ye are saved,' is their motto. A short sentence taken in its naked shape, without note or comment, remark or explanation from the Sacred Scripture, and foisted upon a worldly populace only too willing to receive so cheap a recipe, has done an immense deal of harm. To push this text, in the way in which it has been delivered by so many sectaries, to its full logical conclusion, would be the ruin of all Christian morality and even pagan virtue altogether. When one remembers that our Divine Lord began 'to do and then to teach,' and that His whole life was a most exemplary keeping of the commandments and the counsels He came to establish, we open our eyes in astonishment at this perversion of the words of one of His most exemplary followers. When Luther was pushed for an explanation he even said, 'Pecca fortiter sed crede firmiter'-sin boldly, but believe firmly. It was in vain to quote St. James ii.: 'Thou believest that there is one God. dost well; the devils also believe and tremble. wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?' St. James's he called an epistle of straw. It was in vain to quote any text of Scripture or any dictate of common sense against this terrible and destructive aphorism. It is curious to observe the coincidence between this interpretation of a text of

Scripture and the depth to which some of the followers of Mahomet have gone. One who has done the pilgrimage to Mecca and has gained the privilege of decking himself in green, and who is recognised as a Hadji, thinks that it matters not what he does in this life, whether he imbrues his hand in the blood of a fellow-man, robs his neighbour, or violates his neighbour's wife: his salvation is assured because he has joined in a pilgrimage, and escaped being a victim to the plague which himself and his companions have spread over the world by their want of cleanliness. It would be unfair to those who put not their trust in works, but who rely too much on a barren faith, to place them on a level with a Hadji. As far as we know such people, they are generally honest, sincere, good neighbours, somewhat inclined to be generous in the way of tracts, and far from pursuing their doctrines to their logical consequences. They get an assurance of salvation, feel a confidence that they are saved through the merits of Jesus Christ, and, indeed, comport themselves very well to all seeming, notwithstanding their utterly destructive tenet of faith alone sufficing for all the duties they owe to themselves and to their neighbours. then, on what grounds do they act justly and up-There is no need of goodness if faith can save them without it. Why, then, trouble themselves with the restraining of their passions or any kind of self-denial? Monasticism, celibacy, Catholic asceticism, all come in for a vituperation and a groaning of spirit on their part. What do they think of St.

John Baptist? It would be uncharitable to suppose that a convenient doctrine of this kind has been invented to cover sins committed, although the conduct of the inventors would need some such cloak; but, then, what are we to attribute it to? If one must and ought to do good deeds, although it be not necessary, on what grounds is this obligation founded? We must confess our inability to answer this question from their hypothesis. If a man sins and does harm, he repents perchance, and lays hold of salvation with a revival shriek, and, believing in the kindness of his Saviour, goes about his ordinary duties in What is to prevent his committing a new His passions are natural proclivities, given sin? him by a Creator in whom he believes after his fashion. We shudder at the blasphemous conclusion to which a further pursuit of such a theme would necessarily lead.

This kind of faith is a fearful travesty of the real supernatural gift—we had almost said that this assurance seems to be the direct work of the devil to blind a person deceived by it. Now, to sin and know that one forfeits heaven by so doing is one thing; but to establish a systematic justification of sin is simply diabolical. The devil even would not do it. He is too logical to be guilty of such a piece of folly. And how many, who call themselves Christians, live and die in this assurance! There is no exaggeration in this: a few quotations from the diary of Isaac Septimus Nullis, a Methodist preacher, will show that this theory is acted upon:

'1851, Jan. 3. Left Ensham. O, what a ten days I have spent there! 'Twas glory, glory, glory all the time; felt such meltings nearly all day.—Jan. 12. Brother George Smith came home with me from chapel. Just as dinner was over, I said, "I believe Jesus died for me; don't you, George?" "Yes," was the reply. "Don't you, Maria?" (our servant.) "Yes," she said. I said, "I believe my sins are pardoned; don't you, George?" "Yes." "Don't you, Maria?" I said, "Let us pray." We knelt down and prayed—got into the conflict. After an hour and a half hard fighting deliverance came; she believed, and was filled with joy and peace, filled full of heavenly influence. We did shout. A young man came in weeping, and said he felt the glory out in the road, so that he was constrained to come in. -May 19. Tea-meeting at our house. Souls were in distress, and fell flat on the floor in every part of the house. One poor soul fell in the parlour about 10 o'clock P.M., and continued till 1 o'clock P.M.' (pp. 13-18).

'1855, March 31. Saturday night, quarter past 11. Five years ago this night, about a quarter of an hour later than this, my name was written in heaven; it has been there ever since; it is there now.' In another place this gentleman writes: 'David Stoner was saved at twelve years of age.' We do not know what became of this happy individual since.

In another portion of this book we find the following:

'1864, Aug. 8. After we closed the special services at Clabby, a few meetings were held in Clones, with good results. A Miss A. (Armstrong), who has recently opened a boarding-school, came forward to be prayed for, and found peace. Some of her pupils followed her example. I called next day to inquire how matters were. Miss A. said, "O Mr. Nullis, we had such a meeting at home last night! I prayed with the girls, and they were all either praying for others or crying for mercy on their own account. After a time I left them, but had not long retired before one of them came to my room, saying, 'We are all saved but Emily;' and, when I looked in upon them, they were hanging on Emily's neck, saying, 'Only believe, only believe. Mr. Nullis said it was only to believe.' Thus they continued till nearly 2 o'clock in the morning"' (pp. 246-290).\*

This is not a matter to be laughed at, for in its absurdity it is sorrowful to contemplate. Here we find a minister, supposed to be an educated man, of good intentions evidently, and very zealous for the welfare of others, travelling to and fro in Ireland, gathering people here and there to make them shout 'glory,' and feel that they were saved by believing only. What can be said to this? He was not a bad man, we must suppose, and he was not a lunatic, as his writing shows. He started young girls and boys at twelve and fourteen years of age in the career of life, with the full assurance, amid shouts and pro-

<sup>\*</sup> Quoted in Dr. Murray's Tractatus de Gratia, disp. ix. p. 346 et seq.

longed prostrations and hysterics, that they were saved and written in the book of life. It is a strange phenomenon, and one that it never entered into the heart of man to conceive. There is no word about their conduct, about avoiding the dangers that beset them, about their moral uprightness in their dealings, not a syllable about good works of any kind—we hope the latter were not condemned—only believe! Mr. Nullis said, 'Only believe.'

An extreme and pious Methodist is not a fair example of all heterodox teaching; but he is of the lengths to which the doctrine of faith without works may be pushed.

We see in all this strange aberration of intellect and Scripture an underlying sediment of real spiritual Here is an earnestness—yea, a diligence—far surpassing the quiet possession of the faith itself, that goes far to make us ashamed of ourselves, when we grudge half an hour of meditation upon the mysteries of the Passion, and behold these poor people spending hours in anxious exclamations to get a deceptive principle into their hearts. There is something grand, after all, in the little spark of faith here acted upon, although to such a sorrowful consequence. What a ground for supernatural edifices of grace and beauty is not to be found in the very wildest manifestations of pietism! It is to be hoped that all those acted in contradiction to their principles, and that the assurance of salvation, so grotesquely rejoiced over, did not make their consciences deaf to the transgressions of the commandments which they were afterwards guilty of in their passage through life.

The next category embraces those who believe

in the efficacy of good works and do not do them. They know perfectly well that their faith is not an assurance of salvation; they know perfectly well that it is, on the contrary, an assurance of damnation if they do not act up to what it teaches. The example of their parents and neighbours, the teaching of their Catechism, the discourses they hear on Sundays and festivals, all tend to show them not only the importance, but the indispensable necessity, of good works; and yet they fall into sin, multiply sin upon sin, and sometimes so get buried in sin that they become habituated to it. They know all the time that they are acting wrongly, and that no amount of faith will save them if they do not thoroughly repent, and that thorough repentance is of little avail unless it be coupled with as perfect an amendment of life. Giving due allowance to the strength of their passions and the seductiveness of their temptation, how can it be imagined that one knowing he stands on the brink of hell, and that his life depends upon a mere thread, which may snap in an instant, can continue It is simply unaccountable, and would be incredible if it were not, alas, too common. Such are the vagaries of human nature, even under the influence of faith. One believes he is saved, no matter what wrong he may do, and does right; another thinks he will be damned if he does not do right, and does wrong. Which of the two is more

illogical? Logic has very little place in a mind when influenced by passion or fanaticism. Reason is obscured, and if faith lives it is all but extinct.

There is this difference between the one who believes in good works and the one who does not. The former may some day be moved by grace to amend his life, and then the pain and trouble of the Sacraments, which make him feel that reconciliation with God is no easy matter, give him an idea of the necessity of doing all in his power to prevent a relapse into the sins from which the Sacrament of Penance has delivered him. One thing is always in his favour: wretched and degraded as he may be, he never justifies his evil course, and never covers over his sores with a false plaster of spirituality, which may hide, but cannot cure them by extracting their virus. For the man who puts away his faith partially, and justifies his excesses by a false reasoning, there is very little hope, and it requires a powerful faith indeed to make him think earnestly, even in a false way, about his eternal happiness.

## CHAPTER XI.

## FAITH THE GIFT OF GOD-GRACE.

HITHERTO we have treated chiefly of questions in which the word supernatural had reference to natural faith. Nature gives us certain faculties, which, when not perverted, can arrive at a certain amount of supernatural knowledge. Thus the mind, in contemplating Nature, beginning with the regularity of crystallised substances and the wonders revealed by the microscope, can travel onwards through the evidences every day dug up from the bowels of the earth of the marks of design manifested in the creation. Casting the power of the senses abroad on this visible world, it gathers knowledge from the variety of ferns, the odour of flowers, the various plants that ornament the earth's surface, and the glorious majesty of the ocean, with the economy which irrigates the earth by showers and rivers, of the gentle Providence which manifests His wisdom thus to man's senses. The mind can, by chemistry, examine the composition of the air we breathe, and find there how intelligently have the gases been mixed of which it is composed, knowing that an excess in one way or the other would destroy animal and vegetable life in a few seconds; it can send its messenger sense of sight through the fluid which surrounds our globe, and see the action of light and heat upon all living things, and thence come to a knowledge of an all-wise Being. It can aid vision by the telescope, and, gazing far into space, follow the courses of those great bodies which move in such regular courses, and sing an everlasting hymn of harmony to the Omnipotence and Wisdom that created and guides them. Going far out among those twinkling stars, and guessing at their magnitude, until wonder is lost in the nebulæ which powerful in the universe with which his thoughts are occupied. Grace is also a free gift, or given gratis; that is to say, it is not given on account of any natural merit of ours, but solely and purely from God's benevolence and excessive beneficence. When some say it is given on account of the merits of Christ, seeing that these also are God's own gifts, we must not change the principle of grace, or charge it with varia-The after graces which a soul can merit come chiefly through the sanctifying grace already given; and, as we are now treating upon preliminary graces, the gratis applies without distinction. is a thing conferred upon an intellectual creature; because though the gift of speech, which Balaam's ass received, was a supernatural thing, it does not come under the designation of grace. Grace is conferred in order to eternal life; a special strength such as Samson received for the pulling down of the house upon the Philistines does not come under the category of grace.

Grace, then, is a benevolent ray of divine goodness, which penetrates through the darkness and misery of this world to reach the heart and mind of man, in order that he may receive by its work a knowledge of God and His revelation, and thereby fit himself for his eternal destiny.

Now, although man cannot merit grace without grace, he can do a great deal to drive himself away from grace, and put himself at enmity with God. He can, by his misdeeds, make himself undeserving of it, although of himself he cannot think even a good thought. Taking, then, man as he is, in his fallen nature, whether he has utterly obliterated all ideas except those that belong to a being of an inferior order, or whether he has cultivated his talents to the pitch of a Greek sophist, he needs this gift from heaven before he can even aspire to the service of God.

The value of grace, therefore, is beyond all earthly things. Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot reach it, power cannot command it. Since man was not created for this earth merely, and since all that is in it cannot satisfy the cravings of his nature, and since all his efforts cannot attain happiness, there is one thought which must lie deep in every earnest soul, and that is a longing that God would send His grace to lift it from its lowliness, and make it an heir of His kingdom. It is for this reason that souls favoured by God beseech Him night and day, that He would not regard the iniquities of His people, but would pour down His graces upon them. for this reason that so many go to foreign countries, leave home and friends and worldly prospects behind, to carry the light of the Gospel to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. have they received, and freely do they give of what they have received; but, knowing that one may plant, and another may water abundantly the seeds that may be sown, God alone giving the increase, they cease not continually to put before an unthinking people the necessity of having recourse to the fountain of grace which never can run dry, in order that

all may be sharers in the same blessings. This is done by the good for the sake of those who have not only rendered themselves unworthy of God's grace, but who have, over and over again, rejected the graces He has bestowed.

To say that grace is free is saying too little. it were given as a reward to human excellence, and if the highest and purest of merely human endeavours were crowned by it, it would still be something free and generous, inasmuch as it is as far beyond human descrts as infinity is beyond finity and life everlasting beyond the limited span of man's There would still be about it the glow life here. and the brilliancy of something heavenly; it would be as if excellence in the meanest service man could render in this world were crowned by a diadem of jewels and a human kingdom. But when we consider man as he is found, both in the unregenerate and regenerate state, and see how far he is from what we should expect, or from what angels would be were they in his place, and when we see grace still poured out on him so plentifully, we begin to see its free and bountiful nature. It must have been a surprise to Lazarus when he found himself out of his grave, and able once more to converse with his former companions. It ought to be a surprise full of joy and consolation to one who has recovered grace or seen the light of faith after he had groped in sin and darkness worse than death itself. Taking, therefore, man in his best natural state, and taking him in his imperfect state, the fact that grace

deigns to reach him at all shows how generous is the Creator, and how far His gifts exceed the deserts of His creature.

But there is another way of looking at the generosity which bestows grace. It is not only given to man in his imperfection and unworthiness, but it goes further down. See the wretch covered with sin and shame, disgusting and disagreeable even to sinners themselves, cast off and despised by his fellow-creatures, whose crimes by their heinousness have dried up the deepest wells of human sympathy. See him in his degradation and despair, flung aside by the world and spurned by human mercy. agine how detestable he must be in the eyes of an all-pure and perfect Being, when he becomes deservedly the object of so much human loathing, and see him then the recipient of grace, and that grace will begin to abound where sin did more abound, and then say is not gratis too small a word to express the generosity of this heavenly gift.

Go still further. Imagine a soul reclaimed by mercy from the lowest depths of sin, and who can live and appreciate the beauty of grace, when he should in justice be condemned for ever. Imagine this soul, after tasting the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, once more plunging into the mire from which he had been extracted. Nay, not only once more, but seventy times seven times repeating the transgressions he was reclaimed from; and then see grace still visiting him, when he is in the most wretched plight of human misery it is pos-

sible to conceive, and say then if gratis can adequately express the generosity of divine grace.

God asserts the freedom of His gift by the manner in which He confers it, as we shall see presently.

# CHAPTER XII.

GOD'S WAYS NOT OUR WAYS.

THERE is no adequate proportion which a thinking man can see between one before he receives grace and after it, or between the various subjects upon whom grace does its work. All our surmises are baffled and our expectations rendered vain when we begin to measure them by the effects of grace. It is as if God would show us that this special province of His dealing with the soul of man must be always beyond our comprehension.

We see a good virtuous person, devout in his own way, and honest and upright in his dealings, and we conclude that sooner or later grace must find its way into his soul. The ground is prepared, and the seed need but be dropped in it. We contrive ways of getting the seed to come, we pray, we speak, we exhort in season and out of season. It is no use; with a bland smile we are told that he feels perfectly happy in his present state, and we see him live and die in it. On the other hand, we

see a mocker at holy things, whose language savours of irreverence, and whose life is the reverse of excellent. We give him up to a reprobate sense, turn away from him as a danger to our own faith and morals, and feel that we should not be surprised some day to hear of his having met a sudden and unprovided death. We lose sight of him for a while; and perhaps the next time we meet it is before the same altar, when his piety and recollection make us ashamed of our own coldness in God's service.

There is also another mode of convincing us that we should not judge the ways of God by our own standard. When we hear our Lord saying, 'Woe to you, Corozain, and woe to you, Bethsaida; for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes' (Matt. xi. 21), we would say, after our human fashion, 'Why did He not preach in Tyre and Sidon, then, and not be apparently losing His time in Corozain, thus causing the people to be worse off by their having so many rejected graces to account for?' We do not know. We know only that one portion of the country got grace and rejected it, and that the other did not get the same grace, though ready to profit by it.

History, in its fruitful lessons, gives us one also on this point. The faith was first planted in Judea, and spread around on both shores of the Mediterranean with great rapidity. Seven hundred bishops once flourished in Africa alone, and the coasts of the Ægean Sea were all studded with churches, which

produced hosts of Saints and servants of God. far-off Britain the voice of a Christian missionary had not yet been heard, and the half-clad inhabitants of America were not yet discovered. The north of Europe was not yet addressed by a missioner, and the millions who bowed down to Buddha and Vishnow passed days in error before the tidings of salvation were carried to them. Follow the course of history; see those nations, petted by a special providence, wrangling over metaphysical subtleties and laying each other's dominions waste on account of theological subtleties. See them filling dungeons with theological delinquents, and showing their unworthiness of the faith with which they were blessed by their open shameful transgressions of its precepts. Why, we say, give these wretches faith, and leave the other poor creatures, bounding over their prairies and skulking in forests for each other's lives, in the darkness of error! We could give no account of it then, but we can partly see the reason of it now. The African coast is laid waste and sunk in Mahometanism and barbarism; Asia Minor, the very cradle of the Christian faith, is a spiritual and temporal waste, over which a curse seems to be suspended. Infidelity is gaining ground in the very centre of Christianity, and the nations then seemingly forgotten-the Americans and the north of Europe, Australia and the far East-seem to be slowly gathering to themselves with avidity and welcome the blessings of which the others were found not to be worthy, and to be rearing aloft the emblem of salvation, whilst nations that once moved to civilisation under its shadow now trample it in the dust.

In our human wisdom, and gushing with the generosity of Christian fervour, we would endow the Church and make its ministers independent. would surround it with affluence and human pomp, and then draw the world to it by admiration. should be the first in everything earthly, as it is in everything heavenly; and we should be ready to draw the sword and spill our best blood to put down any tyrant who should dare to oppress the Spouse of Christ or make Him suffer again in the persecutions of His members. And we should do well, and we should deserve a recompense in heaven for doing Perhaps, however, by over-doing the matter we should make room for worldliness and laziness in the Church itself, and thus sow the seeds of its partial destruction or dissolution. God acts differently: He permits persecution and spoliation to come upon the choicest portions of His kingdom in this world; He permits the grandest monuments raised in His honour to be razed to the ground or to stand there as mutilated ruins bearing evidence to man's iniquity. He permits conquest, famine, tyranny, and robbery to grind, slay, persecute, and impoverish the nations most faithful to Him, and He keeps the faith glowing in their hearts with the brightness that illumined a martyr's heart when going to the stake, or the heroic constancy which bore a confessor cheerfully through years of penance and mortification. He permits misfortunes to gather around the poor and virtuous man, and gives earthly prosperity to the rich and vicious. Verily His ways are not our ways.

It is therefore the height of presumption for us to try and lay down laws or channels of our own for the coming of grace; the laws will be beautifully set at naught, and the channels will remain for ever dry.

There are two things which God sees and which we cannot see, and which no amount of human learning or wisdom can penetrate. One is man's interior, and the other is his future.

We see man's exterior actions, and we judge of his interior according to their tenor. We are not wrong in doing so; no more are we wrong in inventing modes for the coming-down of grace, except that we often find ourselves mistaken. If we see good fruit we judge that the tree is good; and here we do not act wrongly, but we are not free from the danger of a mistake. If we saw the Pharisee and the publican leaving the temple we would rather be seen speaking to the former than to the latter; we should dine with him, and consider him well worthy of our respect; whilst we should shun the other, and repudiate the notion of being considered as one of his friends. In thinking thus we act upon our human knowledge; and if God's acceptance of the one and rejection of the other be at variance with our ideas, it is because He sees the interior and we do not, and, what is more, we cannot.

Let us apply this principle to some of the questions that bear upon our present subject.

We see a man who is exteriorly good and virtuous, and worthy, as we think, to be a member of the holiest Church upon earth. He seems to be a paragon of every pagan virtue. God sees something in him which would not suit at all. He sees a spirit of indifference or the root of tepidity underlying all that exterior moral goodness, and hence He lets him continue in his present state. Again, we see one who is a zealot in false maxims, who rushes hither and thither with brands to set fire to Popery, and who longs to see every Papist extinguished. There is in his heart a spirit of zeal misdirected and the roots of future fervour. God sees this and we do not. In an acceptable time grace visits him, transforms him, and the fire that once burnt with the fuel of a zealot now burns with the sweet flame of charity in the fold of Christ. Again, we see a man who is evidently a sinner, and glories, perhaps, in his shame, whose company we would very justly avoid, for fear of any contamination of our own morals. God sees in him some seeds of goodness, which have long been choked by the weeds He allows to grow; these weeds are pulled up by grace, the soil is moistened by tears of sorrow, and virtues begin to flourish abundantly under the care of the Divine Husbandman. Let us, then, bow our heads before we examine into the inscrutable designs of God.

In the second place, God knows the future; all things are open to His eyes, and He is, as St. Augustine says, like an artificer who goes to a wood to cut down a tree. He does not cut down the tree

that is straightest and most comely, that has the finest trunk, the most graceful branches, and the best leaves and fruits in the forest. No, he cuts down, perchance, the oldest, the ugliest, the crookedest, and most gnarled tree he can find, because that suits the article of furniture or other piece of mechanism he intends to form out of it. the Divine Artificer with members of the human family. He subdues by His grace, not those who are most seemly to the human eye, but those who are most useful for the future designs of His wisdom. He did not grant to Palladius the glory of converting Ireland, although he came in all the power and fervour of a missionary; He had reserved that work, not for the bishop who is now preaching on a hill in Wexford, but for a poor slave who is herding sheep in cold and hunger on the side of a mountain in the county of Down. Who, therefore, will presume to be His counsellor?

The person whom we imagine to be a vessel of wrath, and worthy of all chastisement, may be in the eyes of God an instrument of His glory, who will yet carry the tidings of salvation to tribes and tongues and nations; whilst we live in the cosiness of our justice, and say, with the Psalmist, 'a Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris.'\* His foreknowledge reaches not only to nations and kingdoms, but to every individual in each of them; and if He would spare Sodom and Gomorrah for the

<sup>\*</sup> Ps. exvii. 23. 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes.'

sake of ten just, how many nations is He now sparing because of the just who are in them, and how many is He chastising either because the just are not there, or because He intends to make them, as He did the Ninevites, a just people! understand the finest works of art whilst they are in process of formation. There is a crudeness, an unshapeliness in them which only an expert can understand. In the same manner we cannot take any given nation or any given person and form a judgment which will be correct by the data we have. We see nothing but confusion, mystery, hopelessness. They are in some divine process at the moment, which we are not skilled enough to understand. In course of time, it may be of centuries, all this congeries of puzzling difficulties resolves itself and comes out a beautiful thing, upon which the eye of the Most High can rest with complacency.

One may ask why this foreknowledge does not prevent gifts being bestowed upon those who abuse them. There is a passage in the Talmud which very aptly answers this difficulty.

A heathen said to Rabbi Joshua, 'Thou believest that God knows the future?'

- 'Yes,' replied the Rabbi.
- 'Then,' said the questioner, 'wherefore is it written, "The Lord said, I will destroy everything which I have made, because it repenteth Me that I have made them"? Did not the Lord foresee that man would become corrupt?'

Then said the Rabbi Joshua, 'Hast thou children?'

- 'Yes,' was the answer.
- 'When a child was born what didst thou?"
- 'I made great rejoicing.'
- 'What cause hadst thou to rejoice? Dost thou not know that they must die?'
- 'Yes, that is true; but in the time of enjoyment I do not think of the future.'
- 'So it was with God,' said Rabbi Joshua. 'He knew that men would sin; still, that knowledge did not prevent the execution of His beneficent purpose to create them.'\*

St. Augustine even thinks sin a blessing, inasmuch as we thereby had the great benefit of such a Redeemer; and so sings the Church in her liturgy of Holy Saturday. Why evils are not prevented is not the question we have now to consider, but rather why blessings come, and that evils are often powerless to prevent them.

The knowledge of the interior and the knowledge of the future, both reaching far beyond any amount of revelation we may ever receive upon either point by history or experience, should lead us to humble ourselves before God's surpassing knowledge, and wisely make us resolve to cease prying into what He has been pleased to hide from our view. Let us know that His ways are not our ways, and that His providence 'reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly' (Wisd. viii, 1).

<sup>\*</sup> Selections from the Talmud, by H. Polano, p. 279.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### SEED BY THE WAYSIDE.

Conversion from error to supernatural truth, and from sin to virtue, depends upon the grace of God. Will some say we have not got this grace, therefore we are not accountable? It is a doctrine of the Catholic Church that God gives every man coming into this world grace sufficient for his salvation. Dat omnibus affluenter. He gives to all abundantly, not a stinted measure of grace, but an abundant supply. Why, then, are not all saved? And why are but few saved? Because all do not act up to the lights they receive; and because few listen to the voice of God as they ought.

That God can give a sweeping grace, so to speak, that can carry all before it, understanding, will, and action, like a mountain torrent that sweeps away bridges and obstacles of every kind, and carries things, never carried by water, off to the ocean, no one can deny. 'In His hands are all the destinies of men.' It would be a blessed thing for us if He gave each one of us this grace, and carried us off against our will to eternity; but it is not His will that this should be so. He has given us freedom of will, and with that He does not choose to interfere. If He seem to have done so on a few recorded occasions, as when He converted the thief upon the Cross, or

Saul going to Damascus, it was only to show what His grace is capable of doing; and that it is not His ordinary providence, the history of conversions from the beginning of the world amply proves. old theologian it was once our lot to read gives a very peculiar illustration of extraordinary graces. He says, in travelling through a town you see large signs outside shop-doors to show you the nature of what is for sale inside—on one you see a huge wooden boot painted black, on another you see a large hat made of tin, on another a gigantic teapot made of some nondescript material. If you entered the shop and asked to buy an article exactly like the one you saw over the door, the shopman would think you were mad, and he would tell you that they sold nothing but the ordinary articles used in every-day life. These extraordinary ones were used as signs merely. In the same way, remarks this old author, God holds out those extraordinary specimens to prove the power of His grace; but that ordinary people are not to expect them, and much less to wait for them or ask for them.

God gives His grace freely, and gives it as a seed which is to grow upon the human soil of our heart. It moves us, it elevates our aspirations, and aids us to the end for which it was given, but it will not save us without our own coöperation. 'God has created you without yourself, but without yourself He will not save you,' says St. Augustine. How this coöperation is procured is a question which theologians debate amongst themselves; but they all agree

that we must give our wills to it before it can come to be of any benefit to us, either as a preparation for or a coronation of God's work in our redemption. The graces we are concerned with here are not those which dwell in or aid a soul agreeable to God, but those which find a man out of the Church, and are his first invitation to enter it. The importance of causing this grace to grow to maturity is the turningpoint of one's salvation, and if it be neglected, we have lost any claim which we might have as a creature to any further summons from on high. aphorism Facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam holds always. God never refuses grace to any one who does his best with the little light he has; nay, He gives more than that to every one. concern is about husbanding it when it comes.

To point out what the seed of eternal life is to one outside the fold is a very difficult matter. We may begin a description of it by laying down the words of St. Paul: 'Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ' (Rom. x. 17). It is generally some idea or notion that one ought to inquire for the true faith, that there is something wanting in the spiritual life, and that it would be well to fill up the want if one knew how. These thoughts often trouble those who give some portion of their time to religious or serious thinking; but there is an immense number of people in the world who seldom or never harbour a serious thought. The circumstances in which their life chances to be cast, and the surroundings of these again, take up

nearly all the interest they have to bestow upon any subject.

The class chiefly averse to having their repose disturbed by anything like grace is the respectable class. They are free from any great passions, and that goes a long way towards making people satisfied with their lot in this indifferent age. Their exterior conduct is so regular that it merits the praise and approval of their friends; a secret comparison, instituted between themselves and fast people around them, gives them the satisfaction of the Pharisee; and they consider thoughts of eternity as more or less interfering with their digestion. Everything is looked at in a business kind of way. The professions or trades intended for their children, and the marriages and events of their neighbourhood, do not rise to any exciting state of celebrity or importance unless when weighed in the scales of human opinion. These quiet people have seldom any decided opinions on any subject except their own earthly pursuits. parson is paid for preaching, the schoolmaster for teaching, and the lawyer and doctor are paid extra because they are found to be more necessary than others on occasions of distress and difficulty. class we speak of have no opinions on politics except those propounded by their daily paper, and their opinions on subjects outside their own circle are those of the last speaker they have heard, or the last book they have read, if they ever do read a book with opinions in it.

To this class may be added the vast body of men

who are indifferent. Indifference is the bane of modern society, and has always been a most serious obstacle to the working of grace. You may preach, you may labour, you may exhort and entreat and spend all the powers of oratory and unction at your command—all to no purpose, for they are not interested, and do not intend to be interested. They rather look upon earnest people as fools and fanatics—who prate about things of which they know nothing instead of minding some steady kind of huckstering business that would bring them in money and make them respectable.

There is no sadder spectacle for one who really believes that Jesus Christ came down from heaven, and suffered so much to save us, than to see such a vast number of good people, like the three Apostles in the garden, sound asleep in spiritual lethargy, whilst the wonders of salvation are being enacted around them. What is to be done with them? They will not read anything that can move them; and if they hear a moving discourse, they will not listen to that minister any more because he has ruffled the even tenor of their lives. It is the consistent regularity of their lives that furnishes them with a shield: it is the beaten and well-trampled road of ordinary living that makes the ground so impervious either to the desire of heaven or the fear of hell. earth is their paradise. Their business is thriving. and they can spread new comforts around them every year. They can educate their children, and give them dowries and professions. They never

speculate—they have not energy enough or courage enough to do it—and they utter a 'Serve'em right!" to every one who becomes unfortunate through his speculations. They rise punctually at a certain hour, and retire at a seasonable hour at night. never get drunk, never utter an oath, never stray away from their own wives or husbands. They are immensely proper, in every sense of the word, and no impropriety is ever to be laid at their door. The tongue of scandal itself spares them, and the rumour of irregularities passes them by. They have neither passion enough to be sinners, nor courage enough to be Saints. They are consequently supremely indifferent-indifferent they live, and indifferent they There is no indifference in hell: but that is found out too late.

These are still visited by grace. The word is sown by the wayside. In the even reading of the newspapers they see occasionally some conversions to Rome, and get a little disturbed thereat. A daughter or two may take to Ritualism, in a mild way, under the sway of a gushing curate fresh from Oxford, or their boys may interlard the slang of their schoolfellows with observations on the movements of the times. All these are seeds sown by the wayside. These things ought to set them thinking; but they 'understand them not,' and the evil birds of prey, the enemies of salvation, fly about and carry off the seeds that are thus dropped. The great difficulty with such people is to make them think for a moment that there is a higher destiny ordained for them by

God than the ignoble grade of human vegetables. To raise their aspirations above the comfortable pew at church, and the quiet sleep in the family graveyard, where a respectable headstone tells the day of their birth and the day of their death, with an assurance to the reader that they 'have slept in Jesus,' is the grand difficulty of all whose charity may move them to be interested in their salvation. The casual seeds dropped by the Divine Husbandman may, in a few rare cases, not be trampled upon by the footsteps of business, or flown away with by the rapacious birds of evil. We have sometimes seen a few green herbs growing on the roadside, and now and again a stalk appearing in the midst of an unfrequented public path. But these are not the ordinary evidences of the growth of grace. green things that grow by the roadside are sapless things, and covered with dust, and the stalks which force their way into the light of the sun are sickly and unproductive. How is this roadway to become a garden, and to flourish with all the verdure, blossom, and fruit of a well-cultivated one? We can give two instances from the lives of the Saints.

St. Francis of Assisi was the son of a merchant, brought up in his father's pursuits, and a very obedient and excellent young man. His life was running in the even tenor of aspiring merchants, and his quiet goodness and industry made his father hope that he would one day succeed him, and carry on the business to the credit of the family and of the town. The young Francis did not give way to the wildness

and follies of the youth of his time. He was neither a gambler nor a lecher, an idler or a spendthrift. He was the beau idéal of a young merchant, and gladly did his father gaze upon the youth's steps as he daily sped to his counting-house or returned to his well-earned rest. This youth one day refused a copper to a poor person who asked for an alms. Fine evidence of thrift, would the wiseacres say, in Let the poor go to the workone of his years. house. We pay taxes for them, and let the State feed them. There is a law against beggary, and the youth is to be applauded, but not entirely; for, to be true to his principles, he should, besides refusing, have given the sturdy beggar into the hands of the police. Francis did neither. He wept over his hard-heartedness. He gave extra to every beggar he met; he was about to rob his prudent parent of all his well-earned gains by his liberality, and great was the consternation at the domestic hearth and at the counting-house in consequence. It ended in Francis giving up everything, yea, even the very clothes he wore, to his younger brother. He went off, a beggar himself, wooing poverty as a queen and mistress, and going into ecstasies over his privations. Foolish young man! would the world say. young man! said the Church of God. Had he stuck to his business he would have decayed as a vegetable in the graveyard of Assisi, and his posterity after Having left all things to follow Christ in poverty and humility, his spiritual children have filled the world with astonishment ever since.

six hundred years he has given five Popes and fortysix Cardinals to the Church; hundreds of bishops have sprung from his spiritual offspring; numberless Saints now flourish in our calendars; and fifty thousand of his sons are scattered all over the world, carrying the tidings of salvation to heathens, giving their lives for the faith; and many more live in their austerity and poverty to edify the Church by their labours and penances. This seed was a small one. It fell by the wayside. O, what fruit has it borne!

Many more instances might be given, but we will confine ourselves to one. St. Francis Borgia was a Spanish grandee, Duke of Gandia, and closely related to the royal family of Spain. He was married, and lived a life of virtue and ordinary excellence in the world. He would have lived and died unheard of and unknown, like the many other grandees whose dust cannot now be distinguished from that of plebeians, but for a singular and yet a very ordinary circumstance. Being a courtier and man of the world, he was accustomed to look upon Queen Isabella as the most beautiful of her sex amongst the grand ladies of his acquaintance. She died. came to assist at her obsequies. He had one glimpse of her face as she lay a corpse, and that was enough for him. He saw the vanity of all human things in that one glance-fallax gratia et vana est pulchritudo. He bade farewell to the world. He entered the Society of Jesus. He led a superhuman life of austerity and penance, and died the idol of his nation and the glory of his Order.

Now these two cases are very ordinary circumstances. Where is the comfortable member of society to whom we alluded who has not at one time or another refused an alms to a beggar, or gazed upon a visage in a coffin from which beauty and grace had departed? Why has not the seed there sown taken root and grown to maturity? Alas, the true faith is not always there to help it in those who are outside the fold, and the energy of a chosen child of God is absent in those who are inside.

If men would but understand that a single thought of heaven or of salvation, brought into a soul by a slight circumstance, by a disappointment, by a family bereavement, by an earthly misfortune, may be the seed of sanctity! Jesus would not have wept over Jerusalem as He did if it had known the time of its visitation. God does visit all. Let us attend to His visits, and try to make room for the grace of inquiry, when that is what we stand most in need of. Let us consider that He has not died for nothing, and what cost Him so much, the salvation of our souls, cannot be a matter of indifference.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## SEED UPON STONY GROUND.

In contradistinction to the class of people mentioned in the last chapter, we find in the world a very large class of ever-moving, shifting, restless, mercurial beings, always looking out for something new,—always attracted by new ideas, new forms of devotion, or new modes of life. There is something commendable in a nature of this kind. It is at least active and capable of motion; all that we see for grace to do is to find a fixed groove where their motion may be placed regularly and systematically, and then to have it moved forward to perfection faster and faster as the sanctifying grace may come.

Change is the essence of heresy and error. The teaching of the Church is one. She progresses, never alters; she advances, and never turns either to the right hand or to the left in her doctrines. There is one remark which it is well to make about those seeking for truth, in order that the description of them which afterwards comes may not be misunderstood. If they move by addition they are likely to keep moving until they rest in the security of the faith; but if their motion be zigzag—now adding, now subtracting, now multiplying, now dividing—they may possibly argue themselves into the Church in the course of their rambles; but they are apt to argue themselves out again, for their soil is not deep, and their boundaries of rubble are very shifty.

The right to inquire into everything, which the Reformation made the basis of religious belief, has in its very falsity some grounds of hope. It ought to begin by putting everything belonging to religion into a Cartesian doubt, and let everybody look out for what pleases himself. This is really the practical theory of heresy. When men start in pursuit of a

religious belief, with a Bible in their hand and very little knowledge in their head, what may we expect to be the result? One will take to Judaism, and perhaps think it a pity that the ceremonial law has fallen into disuse. Another will cherish the permission for polygamy, and perhaps join the Mormons or the Mahometans. Some who are inclined to be sombre and avoid externals will think that to worship God in spirit and truth means to worship Him by bawling psalms in a whitewashed conventicle, or by groaning in spirit and uttering no audible sound. These fancies, and hundreds of others, affect men according to their natural dispositions, and continue with them until some new humour or disposition intervenes to displace the old one. A little artistic taste in music or painting may draw them to admire the ceremonial of the Catholic Church, and if their fancy run on millinery and embroidery they may find elevations for the soul heavenwards in lace fringes and elegant Tastes are so various that it would be orphreys. an endless task to pursue their vagaries, especially when one may go certain lengths and stop there, and another may go further. It is the boast of the Established Church of England that all varieties of doctrine, from high ritual to low rationalism, are tolerated, not only amongst her people, but amongst the pastors themselves. No fairer specimens of the stony ground, where the soil is light, and where the blades of religious worship spring up suddenly, to wither nearly as soon, can be given than the various

phases of the Church of England. There is no sort of opinion from bare Deism up to the very threshold of the Catholic Church which does not find its exponent and its temporary tribe of followers.

Sometimes these shallow crevices get filled up and deepened, and then we find them forming dissenting bodies, with a code of laws binding them together, and a settled systematised form of worship. Arians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, form their own systems, and think that in them they find the truth that they were looking for, or at least enough to satisfy their present spiritual hunger. One encouraging thought accompanies the moving multitude. They do really 'hunger and thirst after justice;' and if they continue to do so there is no doubt that a day will come in which 'they will have their fill.' A few advices taken from the nature of hunger may not be amiss in directing them how to pursue the faint glimmerings of truth which may shine upon their way. The first advice is, that where there is hunger for the Word of God in any way, it is a sign of a sound spiritual constitution, just as hunger for one's meals is a sign of good bodily 'Hunger,' says Segneri, 'makes birds leave their nests, beasts their lairs, and all animals their place of security, and run the risk of capture or destruction, in order to satisfy its cravings. Hungry people are not accustomed to come slowly or too late to banquets prepared for them. So ought people to act in the spiritual hunger for the Word of God. Hunger does not seek for dainties, but is

content with plain substantial food; nay, will not object to inferior things, ill-cooked and ill-served. provided for the time no better can be had. So does the spiritually hungry man. He must have religion of some kind, and if he cannot get what his taste would like best, he will put up with the nearest substitute he can find.' But it must be observed that in this point of the comparison or simile there is a difference. A hungry man may be satisfied with coarse food in the time of hunger, but he will strive for something better if time and opportunity serve him. To put up with a meagre dish of spiritual fare may be well enough in time of spiritual famine; but the plenitude of God's favours must be sought after when they can be procured. A hungry man, again, will not spend his time at table in feeding his neighbours, or in examining how they help themselves. He will first attend to his own needs, and if he have time will attend to the needs of others afterwards. So there are many who hunger after truth, and instead of nourishing themselves with it wait politely for companions to join them, and are more anxious about the conversion of others than they are about their own. Politeness is a very good thing, and a very nice thing; but it is not very agreeable to a hungry man; nor is it his choice, but his grief, that he has to submit to its requirements. Now the question arises, Is it spiritual hunger or spiritual satiety that sends the majority of people in quest of varieties of spiritual pabulum?

In some it is hunger; in others it is satiety.

Those who seek with earnestness, because they feel an interior longing for holy things, and grasp eagerly at anything at all that recommends itself to their appetites, are the hungry ones. They will go on, from one kind of food to the other, until they come to the real thing at last, and then their former avidity is directed to an increase of the graces they taste, for the first time, in arriving at the truth. Those who seek for new dishes are like epicures. have tried every kind of spiritual nourishment. They have fed themselves with sermons, indulged in prayers, gorged themselves with reading, and now they want something highly spiced, richly flavoured with anathemas, or the reverse, to give their sated appetites a little piquancy, and make them relish their ordinary food. Any new thing, therefore, has a fascination for them; and they run after divers preachers and various churches, and taste daintily of various systems, ending generally in spiritual dyspepsia, and finding nothing to suit them in any sect they know.

There is one consideration which may be useful to those whose state is represented by the stony ground of the Gospel. It is lamentable to observe all the varieties of belief which exist, and which pretend to have Scripture for their warrant. It is lamentable to observe how many well-meaning and apparently sensible people are 'carried about by every wind of doctrine,' no matter where it may blow from, or whither it may carry them; but there is one consoling thought which must not be lost

sight of in the midst of this ever-varying and evershifting scene. One sect may refuse to hold communion with another, or consider that some branch of a Church is less perfect than its own. No two of them may agree further than a few of the fundamental truths of Christianity. Some may dispute as to the number and nature of the fundamentals One species of worship may reject and themselves. another receive the same doctrines. They may, in fine, agree to differ, and still grasp hands over the gulf that separates them, or they may not. They may believe anything, reject anything, accept any-'thing, condemn anything they please, and they often do use their liberty to the full. They are not so bad as we may think, for there is a bond of unity among them all, which they all acknowledge and religiously maintain, and that is: a deadly animosity and an inextinguishable spirit of opposition to the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, the whole of the teaching of some sects consists in a denunciation of the errors of Rome. The word Protestant implies a protesting against something, and we know what that something is. The opposition to Rome takes various shapes, according to the bias or reading of the objector. Some go the length of old Reformers, and consider Rome the mother of abominations and the ugly beast seen by St. John in the Apocalypse. Some think her a portion of the Church, but rather deeply defiled in doctrine and practice. Indeed, their mode of protesting is as various as their opinions, and quite as shallow and changeable; but

that it exists no one can deny who reads their books or hears their language. So essential is opposition to Popery that it would seem as if error could not exist without it.

It came to pass, some time ago, in the north of

Ireland, that a Protestant congregation were sent a new pastor. He was a scholar and a gentleman, of very fine tastes and very civil disposition. He considered that it was against charity to malign his neighbours, and impute errors to them of which they were not guilty. He preached a few Sundays to his flock on the few positive tenets which they all held, and spoke to them kindly and movingly about charity and mercy, and a trust in the Saviour for a remission of their sins. He was an exponent of whatever was gentle and becoming in Protestantism, and thought to educate his people up to his own ideal of pure Christianity. He calculated without his host. His congregation grew less and less, until his church bid fair to become empty. Meeting the Catholic priest of the place one day, he spoke to him on various matters affecting the welfare of their respective flocks, and among other things mentioned the gradual diminution of his crowd of hearers. priest asked him what kind of preaching he treated them to, and the parson told him. 'You never attack me or my people, by calling us all sorts of bad names and holding up our doctrines to ridicule?' 'No.' 'You never call us idolaters, and you never tell the people how much I charge for absolution?' 'No,' replied the parson. 'You never call the Pope

the man of sin, or tell them how fortunate it was that King William, of glorious and immortal memory, freed them all, and washed Popery out of Ireland by the waters of the Boyne?' 'No,' replied the parson; 'I don't intend to trade upon false and exploded diatribes. I had the happiness of seeing the Pope and getting his blessing, and a kinder or gentler old man I never met in my life.' 'That will do,' exclaimed the priest; 'if you tell that last incident to anybody but me in this village, the sooner you pack out of it the better. Let me tell you, then, as a friend, how you can keep your congregation together. Give a periodical sermon against Popery, and if you do not find it in your heart to say hard things, use any number of big hard adjectives that none of your people can understand; for, you know, with them as with others, omne ignotum pro magnifico. Give them a few sermons like that until you get them to listen to you, and then you can, by degrees, begin to give them a little Christianity; but in small doses, mind.' The parson took his advice, and soon drew crowded houses.

Thinking people often find their way to the Catholic Church by the very diatribes that are uttered against it. There is a well of charity in human nature which even theological hate and fury cannot dry up.

Some one may observe that there are varieties of discipline and practice in the Catholic Church herself. Undoubtedly; the Catholic Church ignores nothing that is capable of being utilised in her

She is one in doctrine, in necessariis unitas, and there is no latitude allowed here. Catholic, she has every variety of minor devotions to suit the tastes of her children. She has her visits to the Blessed Sacrament, her sodalities and confraternities. She blesses beads for some, scapulars for others, medals and crucifixes for others. If you are more devout to one Saint than another, she has plenty in her calendar from which you can make a selection. If you like a Low Mass for your devotions, she has a time for it. If you feel your soul raised to Heaven by grand music and ceremonial, she will accommodate you in that also. Her devotions are all varied, and must be sanctioned by the Head of the Church, or sometimes by a bishop.

Devotional matters, apart from the essential duties of the Church, have an attraction of their own. Some may take up one devotion and put it down again; some may take to going to daily Mass for a while, and get tired of it when the days become shorter, darker, and colder; some may get filled with extra fervour in times of missions and retreats, join pious associations, continue faithful for a time, and then fall away. These are people of the stony ground also, 'for when there ariseth tribulation and persecution because of the world, they are presently scandalised.'

## CHAPTER XV.

#### SEED AMONG THORNS.

RICHES are a great motive power in this world. What is there that cannot be procured by a rich man? He becomes respectable, even though he be quite illiterate, and he will have hundreds glad to be recognised by him who despised him in the days of his poverty. Every creature comfort is immediately within his reach, and in many instances the way to honour and position can be opened by golden keys. There may be a few who will whisper 'shoddy' or suchlike unbecoming words in a rich man's absence, but nearly all his friends make themselves agreeable in his presence. Some may honour him by drinking his wines, and others by marrying, in order to live upon, his daughters; but still Crosus, whether in ancient or modern times, enjoys privileges which are totally beyond the reach of respectable poverty. A rich man is safe enough as long as he thinks that money does not give brains or culture; but he is apt to forget that, in the obsequiousness he receives from his acquaintances. tastes may be low, as they generally are, but then he can gratify them on such a princely scale that their glitter hides their vulgarity. He may try to enjoy expensive things, but his taste in these is regulated more by their cost than their excellence. He becomes patronising very soon; and when priests

and parsons and managers of charitable institutions bow to him, because of the help he can render them, he begins to think that Church and State are beholden to him, and that his voice should be heard in them since so much of his money is spent in them.

If a man, besides being rich, is also penurious, he

becomes a local tyrant. He despises those who live up to their income, and those who live beyond it are objects of his contempt. Everything is measured by its market value, and nothing is worthy of consideration if its good points cannot be calculated by the ready reckoner. Severe on himself and stingy with his children, he is full of self-sufficiency, and if he educate his offspring to the rank of gentlemen and ladies, he soon suffers from a conscious inferiority, which he generally revenges on others. Charity is to him so much waste, except offerings be printed in the columns of a newspaper, where he loves to see his name after or between lords and titled people. What are lords to him? buy up two or three of those with whom he is acquainted, and perhaps he holds mortgages over the properties of people who move in high society. Is it not grand to add still further to his treasures, and thus enlarge his phylacteries every day? Others, less rich, but thriving, envy him his position, and long for the day when thrift and industry will show their influence in their case likewise. Thus grows the sacra auri fames—inspired by possession, desired by the poor, and given a certain position by all.

The world is not quite so bad after all. There are many rich men in it who know how to make a good use of their treasures. They give employment to the needy, they aid struggling merit, they are charitable, after the manner of the Gospel, secretly. They gain blessings from all around them, and they set off their riches by nobler gifts of mind and acts of varied benevolence. However, there is even in those a disposition to patronise, and in protecting or aiding a church they like to have a finger in the sacristan's department. They certainly have respectable precedents for that, as we may see in the continental Governments; and it often happens that priests are not as free from servility as they ought to be, especially if they lead a sickly half-dependent existence under the shadow of a Catholic manorhouse. We remember hearing of a Yorkshire squire, who, in the times of persecution, sheltered a priest to provide spiritual comfort for the poor Catholics who had to skulk for existence in the neighbourhood, and to do chaplain's duty for the family. His social duties reduced themselves to the saying of grace before and after dinner, and it was understood that he should retire after he had given thanks. On one occasion some Protestant neighbours dined with the Catholic magnate, and one of them, having noted the departure of the chaplain, asked his employer, 'Do you believe that that gentleman I saw disappearing by yonder door can call down his Maker by a few words upon what you term an altar?" 'Of course!' replied the host, defending his theory

most energetically. 'Do you believe,' insisted the troublesome Protestant squire, 'that he can absolve your sins?' 'Yes,' replied the Catholic, again defending with squirish expletives this cardinal doctrine of his Church. 'By George!' shouted the Protestant, bringing his fist with vehemence upon the table, 'such a man as that deserves a glass of wine!' The time is gone when priests were considered as upper servants, and the days of parsondom, described by Macaulay, are gone also; but something of the disposition is yet to be found as an appanage of riches.

That our Lord and His Apostles all decried riches is one of the leading truths of the Gospel. 'Woe to you rich,' and the illustration of a camel and the eye of a needle, all are familiar with. The wonder is how such things can be so easily forgotten by those whom they concern. It is enough to remark that the foundation of Christian morality, first given to the world in the Sermon on the Mount, began with 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Poverty was the leading characteristic of all the apostolic preachers, and they evangelised the then known world without scrip or staff or a second coat. That spirit is still preserved by the Church, notably in her religious Orders, and in modern times in the secular Orders also. have never furthered the interests of the Church. They have always sown the seeds of her decadence and laxity, as well as sterility of the higher and nobler virtues which belong to her. Our Lord says

of His word in the parable, that its falling among thorns means its falling among riches. 'And he that receiveth the seed among thorns, this is he that heareth the word; and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless' (Matt. xiii. 22).

That this should be the case in individuals is natural enough. To receive a call to leave all things and follow Christ in the midst of prosperity is very trying. To leave what you have laboured for so long, and what you find so useful and beneficial, requires a heroic effort and a grace given only to The history of the Catholic Church gives many grand instances of it in the lives of her Saints. She has canonised kings, queens, and princes who left their crowns and sceptres upon the altar, and served God in the poverty and humility of a religious life. Even at the present day her cloisters number many who left happy homes and large fortunes to spend their lives in preaching the Word of God, and spending themselves and being spent for the service of the poor, sick, and ignorant in asylums, hospitals, and poor-schools. It is remarkable, also, that this grace is often given to the best and most talented members of a family, to the fairest daughter or the most gifted son. That a divine vocation may sometimes cause family trials, and meet with obstacles, is but natural; still it is admired by its very opponents. It has its recognised place in the Catholic Church, and there are never wanting plenty who follow the eyangelical counsels for their whole

lives in every country where the Catholic Church has a footing.

Non-Catholic bodies are averse in principle to the leaving of all things and following Christ in the higher ways of the spiritual life. Among them no spiritual life is recognised apart from the noble position of pater or mater familias. A few illegal imitations of Catholic monasticism here and there only awaken the latent spirit of heresy in its boldness, and make it lash itself into a regular fury. Popery is sniffed from afar by the furibund zealots, and only the good sense or apathy of the multitude prevents a riot or a scene of destruction.

It is a maxim of heresy that we should try to serve God and Mammon. Our Lord told us we could not do it, but that does not matter. One can see this new gospel daily preached by our doctrinaires and news-trimmers. 'Lo!' speaks forth a leading article, 'the spirit of the Gospel as manifested to the world by the blessed Reformation! Before the Reformation what was England? what was Germany? what was America? England was confined to her own seas, and claimed but a nominal suzerainty over its neighbouring islands. Her lands were occupied by monastic institutions, and plains were studded with splendid churches, and changed for the better, as any one may see. All that has been changed by the Reformation. We scattered the stones of the various sanctuaries, and sent the monks and nuns to go and dig and spin or be beheaded. We raised the palace, with its roomy nur-

sery, where once lived the celibate bishop. We have built factories and shops upon the sites of convents. We have sent forth our ships and our soldiers to conquer the world. Our fleets command the seas; our flag is waving over citadels in every quarter of the globe; four hundred millions of people obey the voice of our Legislature; and wealth and prosperity have flown into our island like the outpouring of many streams. Our voice is heard in the councils of the nations, and our word is trusted in by every kingdom under the sun. Germany, too, after long struggles and brave battles, has achieved her independence, and frowns defiance from her native forests upon the wide world around. United States, that glorious trophy of Protestantism, bids fair to eclipse the glory of ancient Rome and modern Britain. Say, after all this, that God has not shown His benign acceptance of the doctrines of the Reformation. If you want to appreciate them still more fully, look at the Catholic nations of the world. France has lately been humbled. Austria has been taught a lesson also. lost her ancient splendour, and her Inquisition is tenantless for lack of power. Italy is indeed marching to fame and fortune, but only in proportion to her hostility to the effete principles of the Church. shifting quarrelling republics of South America, where Catholicism is professed, offer a beautiful contrast to the United States, and Southern Europe offers a similar one to the North. Protestantism is a spirit of freedom, of enterprise, of progress.

makes people self-reliant, energetic, and persevering, because it gives them the freedom of their opinions and emancipates them from the thraldom of Rome.'

Such, we may safely suppose, is the spirit of exultation with which the writers of our day can point to the material prosperity of the nations which are dearest to their heart.

Now, we should like to know in what part of the Scripture did Jesus Christ or His Apostles promise material prosperity to His followers? He promised them persecutions, tribulations, and the opposition of the world even to the very end. Catholics are not wanting in enterprise; but we must candidly acknowledge that material comforts do not enter into the rewards which the Church holds forth for well-doers. The Catholic Church certainly thinks more of the next world than she does of this, and she sees dangers in the amassing of riches which she does not find in the profession of poverty. In this she is very like her Spouse, and she does not promise her followers to restore the kiugdom to Israel. kingdom is not of this world, and her whole efforts are directed towards reminding men of their latter end, even when they are rushing forward to material prosperity.

The argument, however, is not a fair one. If it were we should consider the gods of Greece worthy of a place in our temples, because Alexander the Great was able to found a mighty empire under their pretended auspices; we should conclude that Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, and Venus, and all the

abominations of ancient paganism show the purity of the religion of Romulus and the Cæsars, because in ancient times the Empire of Rome embraced the whole of the known world. This is an argument that proves too much, and therefore proves nothing. Religion and material prosperity are very far from being one and the same thing. Kingdoms and empires rise and fall, but the Church of God abides for She flourishes in a republic as well as in a monarchy, and only wants to be left alone and not interfered with in her spiritual sway over her own children. People may build their ships, lay down: their cables, and run their trains; the Church will bless them, and pray that they may be the meansof civilisation and sanctity. She will send her missionaries to civilise every discovered tribe of savages, and raise her edifices to gather her children together in the lands of enterprise and progress, as well as in the stationary and effete nations who show their bravery in trying to crush her. It must be acknowledged that the Catholic Church has more liberty under the British and American flags than in other nations; but this comes from the natural love of fair play inherent in the Anglo-Saxon race, and not from the spirit of Protestantism. It was only when England became less Protestant, and when America became ashamed of the puritanism of her pilgrim fathers, that this spirit of fair play began to rule the councils of their respective legislatures. Perhaps a devout Protestant would see that a spirit of indifference generally accompanies riches and prosperity.

Thus we see again that the word of God is apt to be choked by the care of riches. We have had in view all through this chapter the hard fate of many souls who are sometimes visited by the grace of conversion to the Catholic Church. They are independent and rich, and they may do as they please; but if they become Catholics they lose their social status. They are dependent, perhaps, and delicately brought up, with fine prospects before them for this world. If they become Catholics they are disinherited; from the cherished members of rich households they become outcasts, and have often to labour for their daily bread when affluence awaited them would they but remain where they are. things we see every day, and great sacrifices are made for the truth, for the Catholic Church has no temporal bribe to offer to a proselyte. It requires a strong grace and a great deal of courage to face poverty and obloquy; but we must obey God rather than man, and a hundredfold awaits those who leave all things for Him. Life eternal is a great prize, and few there are who gain it.

# CHAPTER XVI.

SEED UPON GOOD GROUND.

THE good ground must have two qualities. It must be capable of receiving the seed, and it must be well cultivated and cared for afterwards, as the fruit

is the chief thing to be expected. The fruit is a hundredfold, or sixtyfold, or thirtyfold, as the case may be; but there is always fruit.

The natural gifts which prepare a person best for the gift of faith are a clear logical mind and a heart disposed to self-sacrifice. The first disposition is not satisfied with shaky and uncertain answers. will not be content to live in doubt, and will not continue long in a spiritual fog, if it can get out of There are some people who never have clear ideas of what their faith is; and if they have, they are very far from knowing the grounds upon which their belief rests. It is the belief given them by their parents, the catechism they learnt when children, or the faith of the Church of their baptism. Good honest people lived and died in the same belief, and they need not pretend to be other than their betters. Those who can settle down into a system of religious tenets in this slovenly manner would be the very last to carry on a temporal business or buy a property on the same principles. They would examine the profit and loss of the former, and consult with adepts in the same line; they would depend upon the advice of their lawyer, and have him rectify the deeds, in the latter. Now all that consistency requires is that they should give as much care to spiritual matters as they do to temporals. Such people never have the good soil unless God, in whose hands are all things, change their dispositions by an extraordinary grace. He sometimes does so, and gets fruit thirtyfold or so in return.

There are others, earnest and persevering, who come to the conclusion that they have an immortal soul, and that this world is not their eternal home. They want to make sure of the next, and are determined to do so, whilst, at the same time, they neglect none of the ordinary duties of their state of life. They must have their ideas clear upon every matter that regards their salvation. They examine, they sift, they reject or approve, in a candid unbiassed spirit, whatever bears upon the subject about which they have not yet made up their minds. Very rampant and extreme arguments, fringed with opprobrious epithets, about a system of religious belief make them suspect that there is something to be said for They take up by instinct the cudgels for the system vituperated, and come to read what can be said in its favour, and so by degrees begin to esteem what they were taught from childhood to contemn. If a thought springing from this reading once takes root in their mind, they are sure to follow it up, and finally come to the knowledge of the faith. prepare their souls, and when God sends the grace they are ready to receive it. There is one danger which lies in the way of those who make accidental advances towards the faith. When the truth dawns upon them there are temporal motives of position, prestige, former theories or books written, which lead contrary to their convictions. They often then turn back, and write defences in magazine articles or pamphlets to convince the world they are not Papists. Grace then deserts them, and such people scarcely ever enter the pale of the Church, although they may have sent many of their admirers and followers into it. This very thing makes them more angry, and drives them still farther off from the goal to which their first dispositions were urging them. Saving this danger, persons of a clear logical mind are on the safe road to the Church, provided they leave prejudice behind them and seek earnestly for the truth.

The spirit of self-sacrifice or natural generosity, which we mentioned as the second disposition, is absent in some, and turned into spite in others by their very friends. They find that human nature is even now much what it was in the time of our Lord, and what it is likely to continue to the end. Those whom they have favoured and been kind to prove ungrateful, fail to see all the sacrifices they have made to benefit them, and consequently exasperate them by their ingratitude. The friends in possession of the faith, which they have reached by the teachings of former masters, put forth innuendoes as the immediate prospect of the master himself coming over after them. For this the master is not prepared. He has not yet received the grace to become a learner after having been a teacher, and, consequently, he puts forth spiteful publications to defend his standing still. If the spirit of sacrifice, which one of this description possesses, came to the point of immolating self, it would surely be fraught with great consequences. Our Divine Lord, in His Crucifixion, sacrificed everything. He had no follower except three sympathisers when He breathed forth His Soul to His Eternal Father. It would be well to look upon that picture if we are to learn.

So much for the preparation of the soil in its natural state. Now, as was said in a previous chapter, God's ways are not our ways. He does not look so much to natural preparations or natural dispositions as we are likely to. He takes us all by surprise. He knows the soil where the seed will find room to grow, and He sends His grace there, to our surprise and astonishment. As no reasoning a priori can bring us to find out where this soil lies, we must illustrate our position by a few examples.

After the Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. there was a general calm in the religious atmosphere of Jerusalem. Everything went on in its usual way. and people began to think they had heard the last of the new theories which were advanced by Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified. The Apostles were hid in a private room, waiting for the promised Paraclete, and Mary was there to console and encourage them. They needed encouragement. They could not appear in public, lest they might be interrogated again as to their friendship and companionship with Jesus; and the example of Peter was enough to frighten them, as they saw his tears of sorrow rolling down before their eyes. At length the Holy Ghost descended, and they all felt like giants. A new strength came into them, and they went forth in twos and threes exercising their gift of miracles. They began to convert people by thou-

sands, and soon very notable members of Jewish society joined their ranks. They were about to make one great conquest, and they knew it not. Any one who was present at the martyrdom of St. Stephen, and saw a young man who held the clothes of those who stoned him, and was full of zealous fury against the followers of the Crucified, would think that he was the last man in the world to join their ranks. When they heard of his fiery zeal against them, and how he organised a system of stamping them out and annihilating them by main force, they would be confirmed in their opinion. This young man, Saul by name, went to Damascus with warrants from the high-priests to seize all the Christians and bring them to condign punishment, and on the way a strange event took place. He was thrown from his horse, a voice spoke to him from heaven, he was struck blind for a time, and in the end he became an Apostle. The Christians suspected him even after his conversion, and the Jews were astonished; yet this was the man whom God had chosen to be the chief exponent of His doctrines. He wrote fourteen epistles, which are now the nucleus of the Church's doctrines and discipline. He was the most severe of all the Apostles against schismatics, and his name is in perpetual benediction. Who would have suspected that such a rich and prolific soil for grace lay hid in the breast of this Pharisee? We could not divine the future; we can only say that zeal and carnestness in a wrong cause, when a man thinks it tobe right, is always better than indifference.

Another case is that of St. Mary Magdalene. When our Lord began to teach all the new perfections which He came to reveal, one should naturally expect that He would form a community of Jewish maidens under the care of His Mother, as He had taken a community of Jewish men under His own tuition and direction. There were doubtless many pure and simple and innocent ladies in Judea, who could well become the types of our future nuns, and lay down the rules whereby these might be guided to perfection. All our prognostications are thrown out of account by His strange and unheard-of proceeding. He did nothing of the kind. The only woman who seemed to have received the full plenitude of His grace was a worthless despicable public sinner. She came in tears for her sins, shed them over His feet, and wiped His feet with her hair. Pharisees were shocked at her approach to so holy a man, and even questioned His sanctity, because He allowed her to touch Him. He took her part; He sent her away freed from her sins. She became His most faithful follower, and was allowed the exalted privilege of witnessing His agony on Calvary in company with His immaculate and spotless Mother. Here again are our human calculations set at naught. A public sinner would be the last we should select for the grand and special grace of conversion and sanctity. God's ways are not our ways, and we know not the best soil for grace. We must never, Pharisee-like. despise any one on account of his sins, no matter how heinous and disgraceful they may be.

There is one beautiful trait in the conversion of sinners peculiar to our Lord's mercy. When men forgive their erring fellows, there is always some recollection of the misdeeds which have been pardoned, and a certain amount of distrust caused by past misdemeanour. In the fact of God's forgiveness such is not the case. Not only are the sins for ever blotted out and forgotten; but they never rise in judgment against one either to shorten the measure of grace, or to create any void between their authors and the mercy which has been their deliverance. Nay, more, it would seem as if the depth and enormity of the sins begat a greater claim to extraordinary graces in after life. Many, who never committed a sin, have lived and died unnoticed and unknown; whilst those who broke every commandment, and even taught others how to do so, have, after conversion, become the recipients of the choicest blessings of Heaven. 'This phenomenon is the more wonderful when we know how pleasing to Heaven are those who are always spotless, since they have special privileges in the kingdom of beatitude itself.

There is one notable instance, amongst many, of this peculiar economy of grace. St. Augustine was, in his younger days, a man of the world, and there was no sin of his age into which he had not fallen. He was a Manichæan, and he was stained with sins of impurity. He became a rhetorician, full of his own wisdom, and distinguished among the scholars of his age. He must have been acquainted with the principles and teaching of the Catholic Church, for

his mother, St. Monica, was a fervent Christian. She prayed for his conversion with tears and sighs, whilst he went deeper and deeper into sin amid the luxuries of a depraved Roman society. She went to consult St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, and he simply said to her that the child of so many tears could Augustine read and studied and lecnot be lost. tured. Gifted with very superior talents, which he cultivated with assiduity, he must be making himself a name amongst the sophists of his age. He was at length induced to go and hear Ambrose. we must remember that Ambrose was a soldier, and more versed in military tactics than in theology, when the vox populi, as he was quelling a disturbance in Milan, proclaimed him archbishop of that ancient city. He must have been much inferior to Augustine in talents and culture, as their respective works show, and he was given to sermonise rather on devotional subjects than on controversial ones; yet his words made an impression, and Augustine was converted by the simple preaching of the ex-soldier.

We know his history afterwards. He became the greatest light of the Church of God. His sermons, his homilies, and his writings take the first place among all the Saints, insomuch that one of his followers propounded the question once: Quid est maximum opus Dei? and answered himself: Intellectus Augustini.

Here we have a hundredfold produced from the most unpromising soil, according to our human notions, by the falling of the seed of God's word upon it in due time, and under favourable circumstances. There are several other instances which might be adduced, but these will suffice. The general conclusion we must come to is that grace finds a congenial soil where we least expect it, and that we must never despair of any one's conversion, no matter how far he may seem from the truth. Those we think near it never reach it; those we think farthest removed are nearest in God's dispensation.

### CHAPTER XVII.

## CONVERSIONS IN GENERAL.

It is only a platitude to say that God could convert a whole nation, or the whole world for that matter, in one instant if He chose. He could, by the exercise of His omnipotence, cause that all nations, tribes, and tongues should be of one mind and one heart; just as He could reverse, if He chose, the curse of Babel, and make every living being on the face of the earth speak instantaneously and fluently one single language. That He should do the former is as much to be expected as that He should do the latter. We set no bounds to Omnipotence, but we must be directed in looking for effects and great changes, either physical or moral, not so much by what God can do absolutely, as by what His ordinary providence has done, and the way in which He

has been pleased to manifest its working to us. It is certain that we have never read in history of the sudden conversion of a whole nation or people. Great things have been done by Apostles in the first ages of the Church, and great things are being done by them now; but this thing has never been achieved, and, as far as we can judge, never will be.

It is true that in the beginning of the Church, and even in the course of its history, multitudes have at times heard with effect the preaching of the word of God, and become converts. not be amiss to suppose that such conversions were, as a rule, incomplete, and that the neophytes required a good deal of instruction after they had received the gift of faith. St. Peter's first sermon in Jerusalem converted five thousand, but it required some time before they were properly instructed; and it was not until the First Council of Jerusalem that the first pastors of the Church agreed thoroughly as to the abolition of portions of the Jewish law. Conversions en masse were very rare. Every one of the Apostles went off in different directions, preaching, converting, baptising, confirming, ordaining priests, and consecrating bishops according as the exigencies of time and place required. Their ministrations reached to the soul of each. Nothing is so plain in the Epistles, which are written by themselves, as the personal knowledge they had of their various converts, and the intimate friendship and charity which The Apostles did not soar existed between all. along performing miracles; but they stayed one year, two years, three, seven, ten, or more years in a place, governing the churches around them by letters and counsels, until the greater need of other places called for their presence, or martyrdom called them to heaven.

The same system was pursued by the Apostles of later ages. St. Patrick visited every part of Ireland, and, although he met little opposition to the planting of the truth of Christianity, he was not content until every hamlet had the benefit of his presence. and until he was enabled, not only to converse with as many as he could, but select from their numbers those whom he invested with the sacerdotal or episcopal office, to carry out the work he had begun. St. Augustine in England, and St. Boniface in Germany, followed the same course in their aposto-When convenient they convoked synods, laid down laws to be carried away by the different bishops to their sees, preached and published by the priests in their churches, and brought home to every household and every member of it individually by the practical administration of the Sacraments. This is the method always pursued by the Catholic Church. St. Francis Xavier, in India, converted people by multitudes, and so incessant were his labours in conferring baptism, that his hands dropped tired by his side; but he never neglected the work of catechist, both by himself and others; and his work would have been more complete and perfect had he received sufficient assistants to carry it on, and had not the machinations of evil men contrived to nullify the grand work he had undertaken, when it was on the very verge of success.

Conversions from Judaism in the beginning, and from paganism at all times, are easier than conversions from one form of Christianity to another. The Jews know that their reason is not far to seek. venerable religion is incomplete; that the law of Moses is one day to be completed by the Messias, sighed for by generation after generation, and foretold by their prophets. When they read the law in their synagogues, and soothe their longings with the plaintive chant of the Psalms of David, they always look forward to the coming of David's great Son, and console themselves by the probability of living until they see His day. Only convince a Jew that the Messias has come, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messias, and the work of conversion is This was more easily done when the memory of our Redeemer and His miracles was fresher in the minds of the people than it is now; when the Apostles, who were themselves Jews, showed by their lives, and much more by their deaths, their own firm belief in all they taught, and spoke of things which their hearers had witnessed with their own eyes and touched with their hands. In after days, when the destruction of Jerusalem scattered them abroad throughout the world, and Rabbi after Rabbi arose to write and speak against Christianity, it is not wonderful that the knowledge which prevailed in apostolic times should become indistinct, and that the false theories and false ideas of the

Messias, which existed even in the time of our Lord, should take firmer root.

Paganism-by which term we mean all forms of worship which existed before Christianity (with the exception of Judaism), and which exists yet in countries where the Gospel has not been preached or where it has been rejected—offered a still greater facility for conversions en masse. The learned amongst them must laugh to scorn, like so many Lucians, the multiplicity of gods, and the degrading superstition which offered some of the best human aspirations to idols or myths. The ignorant multitude, chiefly moved to acts of worship by their dread of the evil one or his machinations, would soon be touched by a gentle religion that appealed to their higher instincts, and made them see in the Deity a Father who loved them, and in whose presence their servitude or ignorance would not cause them to be rejected if their hearts were innocent. The longings of degraded human nature for something that would raise it above sin and despair were but too likely to rush with eagerness to the tidings of salvation preached by men, who had left country and home and lived in privations in order to carry the message to the souls of their brethren. simple history of the Passion of our Lord, that moved the heart of the thief upon the Cross, cannot fail to appeal to every best human feeling, and elicit gratitude from the most obdurate. Hence we find that in all countries whose history we know, the progress of Christianity was more speedy among the

pagans than it was in the ages immediately following the work of the first missionaries.

The same rule does not apply to heretics or schismatics, or to their descendants. There is first a curse attached to those who break away from the Church, which prevents grace being so plentifully The authors of heresy and schism instil bestowed. into their followers false ideas of the Church they have left, and pretend that they have been obliged to separate from her because of her corruptions. These are invented or magnified, and the inheritance of hate and misconception imbibed by the children of heretics is a fearful obstacle to a return to the truth. They have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and in many cases they will not understand lest they might have to mend their ways. Conversion en masse is almost a sheer impossibility in cases of heresy and schism. It is a very difficult process even with individuals. Yea, it is easier to convert a tribe of pagans than one single Protestant. We put aside the contentment with which many hug fragments of truth to their bosom as the whole faith, and anathematise all others. We shall have occasion to refer to this peculiar phase of heresy further on.

The most notable instance in the annals of the Church of the futility or hopelessness of conversions en masse is that of the Greek Church. It was in the middle of the ninth century that Photius began the schism which now divides the Eastern and Western Churches. The breach was at first a slight one—

the motives were childish when we consider them by the light of modern ideas. The chief points of difference were leavened or unleavened bread in the Sacrifice, some hazy notions about the Filioque, and a few They were very like the fable of the wolf and the lamb. The breach was widened in the eleventh century by the adding of something always dear to heresy and schism-liberty for married priests to retain their wives. The grounds of union still remained; unlike the Anglican schism, the Oriental one retained the Apostolical succession, and even subjection to the See of Rome, except in some matters of discipline. One would have thought that the healing of the breach would have been quite easy under such circumstances. It was tried at the Council of Lyons in the thirteenth century, but failed. It was tried again at the Council of Florence in the fifteenth (less than a century before the Lutheran heresy), and, to all appearances, succeeded. The Latins and Greeks subscribed the same formula, and agreed upon all points of faith. Hymns of thanksgiving were sung in both languages, and the patriarchs and bishops returned to their sees, jubilant over their recovered unity. All the other Oriental bodies, who had drifted into heresy-for heresy always follows schism-came to Rome by their representatives and made submission to the See of Peter. The Monophysites, the Nestorians, the Eutychians, the Armenians, and even the Copts and Abyssinians submitted. All seemed beautiful and smooth to the eye of the superficial observer.

Storms, however, soon burst upon the placid horizon of the Church. The fall of Constantinople, the rise of the Muscovite power, the incursions of the Saracens in Africa, and even in Spain, distracted the minds of men. A falling away in ecclesiastical learning and discipline in the East threw the destinies of the Church into the hands of lay despots, and the schism which still holds its sway by ignorance and sterility in the East was established. The schismatic Greeks have never evangelised a single nation since, and now they are producing Nihilism and Socialism as the legitimate offspring of their disobedience.

It is a remarkable fact that the only portions of the Greek, Armenian, and other Oriental rites which remain united to the Church of Rome, are those whose forefathers were individually converted by the preaching of Latin missionaries. Conversion en masse has been a failure, whilst conversion wrought amongst individuals has still persevered. Bigotry and hatred of Rome, which finds vent in cruel persecutions and exile to Siberia, have characterised the Russian Church even to our own day, whilst a fidelity worthy of the first Christians has marked the existence, even in blood and suffering, of the United Orientals of every rite. The United Greeks are still much inferior to the Latins in learning and civilisation; but they are strong in the faith, and fervent in the observance of their tolerated discipline. These facts speak for themselves.

Considerations of this kind ought to have weight

with many of the advanced members of the Church of England. They have theories of branch Churches, and live in the prospect of some day becoming united to Rome in a large and respectable body. There is a notion afloat that Rome would make concessions in points of discipline, for the sake of receiving a learned and fervent body of members. Rome might do it if she chose; but her doing so in the past has been fraught with such little good that we question much whether she will try it in the Another point ought not to be forgotten. Whosoever feels that union with Rome is desirable can no longer conscientiously remain in a communion which Rome condemns; for death will not spare its victim to wait for a companion. Anglican Communion, even in its highest and most Ritualistic phase, is much farther from Rome than the most degraded archimandrite of Russia or Greece and his followers. It looks fair enough on paper to claim true orders and revive Sacraments long, long blasphemed; but no pretensions can make Rome acknowledge as certain what she does not now look upon as deserving the merest privilege of a doubt. Historians may give versions of Nag's Head consecrations, and argue pro and con the apostolical descent of Parker from Barlow, and critics may spend the vials of their wrath on all who gainsay their conclusions; but the one fact remains, and cannot be demolished by arguments: in the eyes of the Catholic Church Anglican ministers have no more orders than the most rampant lay preacher who ever spouted Gospel phrases from a tar-barrel. It may be painful to contemplate, but it is none the less true, and it is useless to try and disguise sopatent a fact by any flimsy screens of verbiage.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CONVERSIONS IN PARTICULAR.

THE late Father Faber was once called upon by a young Oxford graduate, who was strongly disposed to have a union effected between the advanced party to which he belonged and the main body of the Catholic Church. He discoursed learnedly on the concessions which might be made, on the points which might be given up on both sides, and on the desire he had to see the event accomplished. When the good father held out no hope, the young man, seeing no prospect of his wishes having the least chance of being realised, relaxed somewhat in hisardour. At length, after some matters of a personal nature had been discussed, he exclaimed, 'Well, what we want now is a General Council.' 'What you want,' remarked Father Faber, 'is a particular absolution.

Digby has shown in his Compitum that all the ways of thought and approved practice lead to the Catholic Church. His method is full of learned lore and singular interest. There is no doubt that the

Catholic Church, in her oneness of doctrine, has a singular diversity of character, according as she may be looked at through her ritual, her liturgy, or the various phases of her discipline in the different countries of the world. People are attracted to consider her in different ways; and the grace of conversion, being confined to no one groove, may come to them in any one of the thousand ways from which they may see with admiration the point of view presented to them. It is consequently difficult to lay down rules for the direction the growth of the seed of conversion may take. A few instances will suffice.

Let us suppose a maiden born in heresy, whom God has endowed with a natural modesty and sweetness of temper. She longs to find a spot upon earth in which she can live happily according to her dispositions and leanings. She takes to the worship of her Maker most naturally; she loves the Blessed Mother of God, and loves her the more when she hears her neighbours decrying the honour paid her by the Catholic Church. She shrinks with a natural horror from anything that is immodest either in word or deed, and the growing graces of womanhood only intensify these feelings. What is she to do? Her parents and relations treat harshly and ignorantly This awakens her curiosity to of convent life. inquire into the nature of this much-abused state of existence. A very slight and superficial inquiry shows her that the convent has for her all the attractions possible: there she finds the chastity she

feels called to; there the retirement and seclusion from the giddy world she so much longs for; there the works of charity towards the sick and the poor to which Heaven has given her such an attraction and such predispositions. She is at once persuaded that this is the life she must lead, and in a short time finds herself a Catholic, and inside the walls of some convent.

Take another instance. Let us suppose a young man of fine parts, a good education, and a fair property. He has scarcely emerged from the university before he finds himself whirled off in a cyclone of pleasures and self-indulgence. His better nature rebels against his proclivities, but the force of circumstances and associations is too strong for him. He finds every help, alas, in his downward course; and all that can draw him heavenwards in heresy is the whining of some Gospel truths exaggerated, which disgusts him with piety altogether. He likely becomes a sceptic, justifies his own courses on the grounds that they are natural, and freshens the zest for pleasures which began to pall by satiety. goes on for some time, until sheer disgust makes him turn away from the remembrance of his own self. Troubled in mind, he meets reverses of fortune and betrayal of friends. He sees in the twilight of his misery some faint glimmering of grace and mercy. He knows not how to set about his reconciliation with God; all the ways he is acquainted with are vague, and end in quagmires. Somehow he enters a Catholic church; maybe speaks to a Catholic

servant; reads a Catholic book; and in the Church of Jesus Christ, where the Sacrament of Penance is administered, does he at length find the only haven of peace for a life but too severely tossed about on the billows of uncertainty.

Mediating between those extremes we find hundreds of others, all differing in manner and degree. One takes the trouble of candidly reading what may be said in favour of a much-reviled creed, and forthwith has his eyes opened to the truth. have known the case of one who became a Catholic from seeing the way in which a newspaper, to which he was a contributor, persistently, and without any provocation, caricatured the dignitaries and the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Another is moved to inquiries in the doctrines of the Church by the street-howlers who hurl opprobrious epithets at her. Some seem to read up to the Catholic Church from their youth. Some come to her by the way of history; some by the way of chivalry; some by the way of poetry; some by the way of art and architecture. There is no possible manner of marking out the mode of approach. God will, perhaps, give the grace of conversion in the very remorse that follows the committal of a sin.

There is another class of people who are drawn to the Church, not so much by argument and reasoning as by secondhand considerations, and these not of the most ignoble converts. One is attracted by seeing the piety which Catholics show at Mass, whilst, perhaps, three are repelled by the same. We

have known a distinguished scholar who traced the first germs of his conversion to seeing a poor Irish beggar-woman telling her beads whilst trudging with her wallet from one farmhouse to another. He was a clergyman of the Church of England, and saw in that poor woman's devotion that Catholicity was not a Sunday-coat religion, to be donned and doffed on certain occasions, and then put aside till the next Sabbath. Another minister would be apt to groan in spirit, and lecture the poor woman on her superstitious and vain repetitions.

Many, again, who cannot reason for themselves, read the list of illustrious people who have joined the Catholic Church in England within the last forty years. There they see the learning, the rank, the wealth, the piety, and the excellence of the various sects deprived of their best representatives by the light of faith. A very powerful argument comes home to them from this. They see clearly that no one has anything to gain, but a great deal to lose, in this world by joining the Catholic Church. know that very many excellent Protestants have sent for a priest when they were dying. They know, moreover, that no one ever left the Catholic Church in order that he might be able to lead a purer and a better life; and no one ever heard of a good upright Catholic sending for a minister when at the point of death. These considerations have a great deal of weight, as they ought to have, and very often move people to inquire further into the claims of a Church which, notwithstanding the way she is abused, has such strong attractions for the best and noblest among themselves.

Seeing therefore the multitude of ways in which one may be led to the Catholic Church, it is almost impossible to give any general rule as to how the truth can be carried to those outside her pale. Sermons that will affect one may repel three, and books that one will read with profit three will put down with disgust. It is very difficult to pierce, by any lance known to controversy, the thick coat of mail which prejudice has wrapped around the souls of those in error. We may lift a scale of it here and there, or find a vulnerable point in it; but the bravery of self-love and many artifices of sophistry will find modes of rendering the thrust harmless, or avert it altogether. Controversy, as a rule, excites passion, and the desire of victory, even in argument, often causes men to be captious. It is very difficult for the natural man to acknowledge himself vanquished, and it is especially so when being vanquished entails such reprisals as leading into captivity all the cherished theories of a lifetime. It is always better to let each one pursue the course of thought most congenial to his disposition and the degree of his education, and when grace has touched him, the process becomes an easy and delightful one.

> 'He that complies against his will Is of his own opinion still,'

sang a poet well versed in human nature; and conversions against the grain are always dangerous.

From all that has hitherto been said, we have come to the conclusion that there are two sensible ways of exercising the work of conversion.

The first is, not to preach controversy at all in the olden way. It is a thankless task to convince a man that he is something like a fool, and that all the theories he has held from youth, and inherited from his forefathers, are absurd. This mode of treating human beings only arouses their ire, and makes them more obstinate than they were before. The great lever for moving the outside world is to hold up to admiration the beauty and consistency of the Catholic doctrine. This is far easier than carping at garbled texts of Scripture and never-ending hair-splittings: as a very wise Catholic philosopher observes, 'If you divide and subdivide too much, you make dust of the most solid material, and the only use that can be put to is to blind people's eyes.' There is a fine scope in the Catholic liturgy for showing off the beauty and symmetry of her doctrine and discipline. All the articles of her creed are so thoroughly united, and every conclusion drawn from them follows so naturally, that the showing forth of them in their harmony and connection is a very easy task. this luminous exhibition be followed by a proper display of her ceremonial, and the work is done. would be a great help if Catholics, in their private life and social intercourse, carried out the precepts of their Church and followed the examples of our Saints. We could then point to their example and say, 'Go thou and do likewise.' Unfortunately this cannot be expected as long as men fall short of being angels. The video meliora proboque deteriora sequor has been an obstacle to this kind of argument in all ages and in all circumstances. It is well, however, to see one acknowledge his shortcomings in the words of the pagan poet; but, alas, we very often find that those who follow evil practices too long, even though Catholics, begin to justify their conduct and to accuse the too great severity of the Church's teaching. This necessitates a great amount of moral preaching in Catholic churches; and we are of opinion that the best way to impress strangers 'who come to scoff and remain to pray' is to preach simply moral discourses, holding up the mirror of the Gospel in its purest and most perfect likeness, and letting each one go away judging himself and his deeds by the picture he has seen. In dogmatic theology, therefore, it is better to preach the text of our theology, and in moral theology it is well to do the same. This process will offend no one. It will cause all to admire the purity and beauty of the Church. fact, to ignore the existence of heretics altogether, even though they crowd to our churches, would be the best way to convert them. It is such a relief to those who hear continually rival Churches cried down to be able to see that there was one Church whose cause was so good and sound, that it required no ecclesiastical attorney to abuse the plaintiff.

There is a second means, and to this we intend to devote the few chapters which are to follow. It is the part of Christian charity to help all those who are looking for the truth. When they once seek for information, it is cruelty to deny it to them. grace touches a soul, it seeks at once to find out the truth which is beginning to dawn upon it, and we should be always ready to smooth the way towards its full shining. This is, indeed, the work of a true missioner and a true apostle, to speak in charity and kindness upon the priceless blessing of faith, and to help those who seek it in the very way in which they are apt to be led safely to it. It is difficult to avoid smiling when foolish theories are put forth in earnest; but it is, after all, cruelty to laugh at those who are victims of false teaching. To approach the Church by admiring her majestic unity of doctrine is one thing, but to lay aside all preconceived notions is another. Very many persons admire the Church as a whole, but have often strong objections to some of her secondary practices.

It is our intention in the following chapters to take persons from the various phases of error, and show them the way to the Catholic Church. We shall first point out how they may come to have an idea of her truth from their own way of thinking, and then we shall consider them as under instruction, and treat with them as any Catholic priest would be expected to do to whom they had recourse in their doubts and difficulties. Inquirers need not read the summary of the errors pointed out in the coming chapters; although, if they do so, we trust their labour will not be in vain. Perhaps a difficulty which troubles their minds may be found answered

in an error of another class. In this eclectic age many borrow errors from other sources without being able to classify or know their origin.

# CHAPTER XIX.

#### ATHEISTS.

PHILOSOPHERS, defining an Atheist to be one who does not believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, have almost unanimously agreed that no such person did or ever could exist. The evidences of God's existence in the universe are so palpable that it is impossible to avoid the inevitable conclusion to which they point. Difficulties there are, and will be always, in the contemplation of the nature and attributes of God; but Non sunt dimittenda clara propter quadam obscura\* is the maxim of all sensible men. We can easily arrive at the detection of impossibilities. piece of matter, and you must logically conclude that it is divisible ad infinitum. Is there a particle, ever so small, which you cannot conceive capable of subdivision? Yet to make a finite thing infinite is an absurdity. Set your mind to meditate on space, and see how soon you get confused. Stretch your imagination out to the utmost bounds of the known uni-

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;Things that are clear must not be put aside because of certain obscurities.'

verse, and you can conceive something outside that again, and so on ad infinitum. Who can tell where a circulating decimal is to end? Deny matter, space, and decimal fractions, then, because you cannot understand them. Again, who can understand the famous paradox in conic sections of the asymptote and the parabola, one a curve and the other straight, when it is proved to a mathematical certainty that, no matter how near each other these lines may start, they will continually approach and never meet? Deny conic sections, then, if you are to be consistent.

In spite, however, of philosophers, we must admit that the world has sometimes been troubled with avowed Atheists. Atheism even claims a martyr in the person of Lucilio Vanini, who taught the negation of the Supreme Being in France in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Being pressed to make a public confession of his crime, and to ask pardon of God, the king, and justice, he answered: 'I do not believe there is a God, I never offended the king, and as for justice I wish it to the devil.' His tongue was first cut out, and he was afterwards burnt at the stake. We have many such Atheists in the world at present, although it is questionable whether they would be willing to give their lives for their unbelief. It is difficult to account for their existence, except on the principle of Lord Bacon, who says: 'A smattering of philosophy may lead a man into Atheism, but a deep draught of it will bring him back again to the belief of a God and a Providence.' Account for them or against them as we will, they

exist; and, unless we fall into their own sophism, we must not deny their existence because we cannot understand it. Atheism is not to be found amongst profound thinkers; but, then, how few men are profound thinkers! The world is full of shallow thinkers, and these may become Atheists in many ways. One way to Atheism is a cavilling spirit which is allied to cynicism. It is very easy to find fault with things that are sacred, to turn portions of the Bible into ridicule, and make jokes at the expense of everything a man holds sacred. Men of this description have lived in all ages; yet few of them ventured to assail a belief so deeply rooted in human nature as that of a God. Petrus Arctinus was accused of Atheism, and his bitter tongue and pen were felt by many of his contemporaries. His epitaph is a curiosity:

> 'Qui giace l'Aretin, poeta Tosco, Chi di ognun disse mal, fuor di Dio, Scusandosi col dir, "Io no 'l conosco." '\*

It is but fair to say that if Peter lived an Atheist, he managed to die a Christian, and regret his evil sayings at the end.

Another species of Atheist may be predicated of those who do not like to trouble themselves with any kind of belief, and take refuge in the sayings and writings of men superior to the crowd, who have

\* 'Here lies Aretinus, the Tuscan poet, Who spoke ill of every one, except God, Apologising for his omission by saying, "I don't know Him."' succeeded, in words at least, in ridding themselves of a belief in a Supreme Being. These secondhand thinkers form a large majority of the lower orders in every country, except, perhaps, Ireland. are the stuff out of which Communists, Socialists, Nihilists, and Revolutionaries in general are formed. Blasphemy is characteristic of their language, and they glory in being supposed advanced or liberal by the world. There is a great deal of boasting and bellowing about the rights of man amongst these people, and they harp continually upon liberty, equality, fraternity. The French Revolution gave us notable specimens of these Atheists, and their generation has not yet died out. Every émeute brings numbers of them into notoriety, and if they remain hid in times of tranquillity, they are only awaiting an opportunity of mischief.

Whether these are real Atheists or not, it would be difficult to decide. Indeed their thoughts are as little capable of analysis as the ravings of a lunatic.

There is, however, one class of Atheists to whom special attention ought to be paid. Qui negant Deum esse quia timent.

These are men who do not believe in a God because they are afraid there might be one to punish them. They are men of evil life and depraved morals. Atheism of itself leads to immorality of every description, to a free indulgence of the passions, and acknowledging no restraint but a prison or a scaffold. Men, therefore, who indulge in vices,

men who keep concubines and advocate the indulgence of impurity, begin by being Atheists in practice, and end by becoming Atheists in theory. No moral man was ever an Atheist. He might be puzzled by difficulties of the supernatural order, or fail to be able to decide between one belief and another; but an Atheist, pure and simple, he could not be. Men, who envy the beasts, and try to bring themselves down to their level, very soon put themselves outside the reach of grace; and it is not wonderful if God harden their hearts, and give them over to a reprobate sense. The Psalmist has described these men in the thirteenth Psalm:

- 'The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God. They are corrupt, and are become abominable in their ways; there is none that doth good, no, not one.
- 'The Lord hath looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that understand and seek God.
- 'They are all gone aside, they are become unprofitable together; there is none that doth good, no, not one.
- 'Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips.
- 'Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood.
- 'Destruction and unhappiness are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.'

We can see this picture too truly realised every day in infidel newspapers, and in the practices of those who cast away all restraint.

In fact, Atheism is but another name for monsters in human shape, who try to destroy religion, piety, honour, chastity, and virtue. They hate goodness with a diabolical hatred. To such a pitch of hatred have they arrived, that there are societies in France and Belgium called Solidaires, who bind themselves by most horrible oaths to hate God whilst in life, and die with a blasphemy on their lips if possible, and if not, in their hearts; who take care that they never give in to the instinct of degraded nature by asking for spiritual consolation when they are about to appear before their Judge in the next world. this be not rank Atheism, and worse than Atheism, we do not know what is. Now the question is, How is a disease of this kind to be dealt with? Grace may reach even such hearts; how is it to be made profitable?

One great obstacle to grace in the heart of an Atheist is pride. He thinks differently from nearly all the rest of the world, and the few leaders he looks up to as teachers are men who have made a noise in their day, and acquired celebrity. He therefore considers all believers in God as a herd of despicable creatures, who have not courage enough to defy the terrors of a wretched eternity. All the great Theist writers and speakers are so many unfortunate men who are still the dupes of a sad superstition, and he thinks them thorough cowards. He therefore so are

in an atmosphere of his own, and looks down with supreme contempt upon all the world. It is as if a man up in a fragile balloon thought himself a being of superior order to the rest of mankind, and so he seems for the time being, whilst eyes are strained watching his aerial flight; but let the balloon burst, or let it drop with him in the ocean, and then he will begin to understand how like the rest of men he is, and how much more foolbardy and helpless. It is the same with our Atheist. He is a great man for a time: he soars in the balloon of politics or journalism -these seem to be the favourite spheres of Atheists -and dictates precepts with a supercilious pity to his fellow-mortals. Let these aerial machines give way, and let him find himself in a prison or in a convict's cell, and he will present a very humiliating picture indeed. Silvio Pellico gives us an account of a fellow-prisoner of his of this way of thinking, and a more abominable specimen it is difficult to imagine.

This prisoner, having admired a tragedy, Francesca da Rimini, written by Pellico, began a clandestine correspondence with him. He declared at the outset that he had no religion; that he admired Julian the Apostate because he was an enemy of the Christians; but that he went much farther himself, inasmuch as Julian believed in God and had some small bigotries, but he himself believed in no God. Pellico tried to bring him to a trifle of sane philosophy; but he only made him wild. The letters of the pseudo-Julian, or Atheist, were, in the words of Pel-

lico, 'qualche declamazione estranea al tema, ora imprecando i suoi nemici, ora ridendo d'avergli imprecati, e dicendo esser naturale che i forti opprimano i deboli; ora confidandomi i suoi amori, e l'impero che questi esercitavano sulla sua tormentata imaginativa.'\* Silvio wrote again to try and convert him, and he says, 'Aspettai più d'una settimana, ed intanto mi scriveva ogni giorno di tutt' altro, e per lo più d'oscenita.'† He sought to bring him to consider something of true Christian philosophy; but, 'Mi rispose alquanto rabbiosamente prodigandosi gli attributi di filosofo, d' uomo sicuro, d' uomo che non avea bisogno di pesar tanto per capire che lucciole non erano lanterne. E tornò a parlare allegramente d'avventure Pellico then mentioned to him that he scandalose.' disapproved of his want of respect for women, of his profane kind of love, and let fall words of pity for the unfortunate ones who seemed to be his victims. This was enough to put the man on his mettle: he defended his most nefarious misdeeds, and would

- \* 'A piece of declamatory stuff altogether foreign to the subject, now cursing his enemies, and now laughing at having cursed them, saying it was natural that the strong should oppress the weak; now confiding to me his amours, and the sway which these held over his troubled imagination.'
- † 'I waited more than a week, and in the mean time he wrote to me every day on other matters, chiefly obscene.'
- the answered me rather furiously, boasting of being endowed with the gifts of a philosopher; that he was a man sure of himself, and a man who had no need to think too deeply in order to find out that tapers were not lanterns. He turned to speak in a lively way about his scandalous adventures.

have dosed his correspondent with them, only that he refused to be so disgustingly entertained.\*

This is a fair specimen of an Atheist: no principle of honour, no idea of happiness but sensual swinish pleasures, and comforting his solitude by gloating over his filthy deeds and calling them philosophy.

The first thing to be done with an Atheist is to ask him to give up his bad life. He is sure to be leading one. If he does, it is easy enough to convince him of the existence of God. That it is difficult to make him give up his obscenities is not quite true. We do not believe that human nature is altogether lost in an Atheist, no matter how infamous his life may be and how much he may glory in it. It is possible that in moments of reflection he will admire the pure, noble, and generous impulses of our nature. Pellico's correspondent did not; but let us hope that he was an extreme case. Get an Atheist for a moment to admire anything like virtue, and then you can lead him on gradually to the fount and origin of all virtue. This once done, the rest is easy. Believing in a God, he will most readily believe in His Gospel; and believing in it, he will have no difficulty in being led to admire that Church in which the Gospel has always been preached. It is needless to say that an Atheist who once begins to detest a life of sin will detest every form of belief which gives the least latitude to sin; and we are not exaggerating when we say that every form of heresy ever yet invented has coun-

<sup>\*</sup> Le mie Prigioni, cap. xxxix. xl.

tenanced some relaxation of the counsels of perfection given by our Lord, and practised only in the Catholic Church. When a man turns away from a life of sin he will try to embrace one of perfection.

It was remarked that generally speaking Atheists are light thinkers, and that they are proud as well as impure. It is well they are so, because a light thinker is thankful to one who thinks for him, and puts truths calmly, gently, and consecutively before him; he will also admire these truths if they are stated by one whom he knows to be more learned, more humble, and purer than himself.

He may find minor difficulties here and there in the whole range and compass of Catholic teaching, but the one cardinal doctrine being impressed upon him, the others will follow. He cannot become perfect all at once, and his instructor must be patient with him. An Atheist, as a rule, begins his conversion by becoming unsettled in his blank negations, and wishing for something better than the husks of swine whereon he has been feeding.

#### CHAPTER XX.

# PANTHEISTS.

PANTHEISM has received but scant notice from Christian philosophers. Its theories seem at first sight so absurd and inconsistent that most of our

writers have been content to toss them aside with a syllogism or two, or, at most, a reductio ad absurdum. That everything should be God, and God everything, is a proposition calculated to make all thinkers rise in anger, and scarcely, in their holy zeal, give time to consider the nature of its impiety until they kick it out of their way as a nuisance. Theologians will give you a summary of its phases, and then settle the matter after their own off-hand fashion. Young dialecticians are apt to do the same. Trained in thinking with a belief in the supernatural always animating our efforts, it is very difficult for Catholic students to descend to the level of certain philosophers. It would be as if a venerable ecclesiastic doffed his sacred vestments, and went into a ring to engage in a few rounds with a prize-fighter. thing is in itself undignified; but if his reverence shows a knowledge of pugilism, and overcomes his adversary, he has scarcely disgraced his cloth, provided he has, like Xavier, done the rude thing in order to gain a soul. This simile seems to convey the idea in vogue amongst Catholic philosophers and theologians concerning Pantheism. It is too absurd, too material, too ignoble, altogether beneath their notice, except to show how gracefully they can throw it aside.

We were once of that opinion ourselves, but experience has taught us a different lesson. There are a great many schools of thought at present prevalent in Europe, and each has its followers, who vaunt the perfection of their own system. We

have theories ranging from pure spirituality down to gross materialism, some rejecting reason altogether and giving way to impulse or fanaticism, and some making reason the criterion of all that is to be accepted as true. The Catholic Church, which holds the monopoly of faith properly so called, has to look upon all, and to meet all on their various vantage-grounds; and she does so successfully, for she generally gathers into her fold the best and purest thinkers of every school of philosophy and theology. Some of her writers are now beginning to see the power of Pantheism in this world.

It is the only one great enemy which the Church has to combat. All other forms of philosophy wander hither and thither; but Pantheism is gaining ground, and disputing the field of thought and literature with all forms of Christianity. We may think of it as we please, but we cannot ignore it. It has formed the staple of German speculations for well-nigh two centuries, and its exponents and adherents at the present time are among the most vigorous writers and bold thinkers the world has ever produced. system which can gain the adherence of real downright conscientious men is not a thing to be ignored. It is not, like Atheism (though some resolve it into that wretched thing), founded upon self-indulgence and a desire to emulate the brute in his brutality. No, its followers are men of grand character, really sincere, and noble both in their conceptions and utterances, worthy of the highest consideration as citizens, statesmen, journalists, or authors, and the last to adopt a theory of any kind if they could see its absurdity, or hold aloof from any form of belief which could come to them with recommendations that could reasonably insure its adoption. It is therefore important that the nature of Pantheism should be candidly and clearly discussed.

It is a very old form of philosophy. India seems to have been its cradle. Brahminism is a species of Pantheism. Brahma is an absolute unchangeable being, out of whom nothing can be conceived to exist. The Vedas and other sacred books represent him as in a state of inactivity, resting in a sort of divine slumber, and at a certain epoch emerging forth into activity and manifesting himself by the individual existences of the universe, which are nothing else than fantastic forms of his preëxistent substance. This system of philosophy found expression in the teaching of two Greek philosophers, Pythagoras and Xenophanes. The Gnostics in the early ages of the Church gave birth to new forms of it, which very soon disappeared from the writings of those periods. Christianity swept all its teachings away in the West, until they were revived in the ninth century by Scotus Erigena. He was followed in the thirteenth by Amaury of Chartres, and David de Dinando, his disciple. Jordanus Bruno, successively a Dominican at Nola, a Calvinist at Geneva, a Deist in London, and a Lutheran in Wittemberg, revived its theories in the sixteenth century, and taught them until he was stopped by the Inquisition in Rome.

The great father of modern Pantheism Spinosa, a Jew of Amsterdam, who taught the theories of this system in a geometrical way. began with a definition which Descartes gave of substance—'Ce qui n'a pas besoin d'une autre chose pour exister' ('That which has no need of anything else in order to exist'). This definition, as any one can see, is ambiguous. The followers of Descartes took one meaning out of it and Spinosa took another. It is not our province to discuss metaphysical questions, but simply to point out from what slight beginnings can arise questions of immense moment. His system resulted in various propositions, but the most marked of them is that 'in society the strength or power of each one is the measure of his rights.' From this comes 'hero-worship,' 'nothing like success,' 'the survival of the fittest,' and a number of theories which have had many great minds for their advocates in our own day. Spinosa met with several adversaries, such as Lami, Fénélon, and even Bayle, and he would very likely have been forgotten had he not been revived again under a powerful school of German thinkers. Kant, in his critique of pure reason, admitted nothing positive but the me; and Fichte went further, by reducing his system to one of pure idealism. Hegel made the origin of everything be an abstraction, almost a mere nothing, which began to develop itself by various external phenomena. Schelling places in this seed of the universe a necessary impulse to grow continually, and be always perfecting itself. Cousin gave the

last polish to this theory, and we may summarise the modern system of Pantheism as follows:

There is but one substance, conceive it in what way you will. It was originally almost an imperceptible atom, endued with vitality of some peculiar description, which necessitated a development of its vis. It went on for long and many ages, putting forth various modifications, which grew in course of time to the visible things that now fill the universe. This original atom is God, and the universe, as we now see it, is God also, the self-same, continually growing to perfectibility. That there is but one substance in the world it is easy to understand from what we see around us; nothing is lost: plants, animals, human beings may grow out of the earth, but they return back to it again after a certain time. Transformations from one visible thing to another may go on in different ages; but when they decay they become something else, and the whole mass of which they were composed, though again transformed, still remains. In this we see a great oneness; but as a oneness pure and simple is inconceivable except by multiplicity, it multiplies its form and itself appears diverse under them and in them; but it is still the same, and every new manifestation of its state is but a new phenomenon to show that it is always al fieri or in a state of progress.

All the discoveries of modern science point to the long periods it took to form the crust of the earth, and then the vegetation which began to appear on its surface. We trace the process by

which a plant grows out of the soil, and how it assimilates to itself from the air, earth, and water what is just suited to form its fibre, its leaves, fruits, colour, and life. From plants we move on to zoophytes, and from these to the life that appears in serpents and worms; then the transition is easy to fishes, to birds, to the vertebrate animals, and finally up to man. We remark in man a finer organisation than in the other animals, but this is because of the law of progress. As man is, so are nations: first simple and artless, ready to believe everything, and with an inclination for the marvellous; afterwards more sensible, given to examine Nature and find out Nations in their primitive state are its secrets. given to poetry and the works of imagination; they then propose heroic examples and try to follow them; they then come to submit everything to reasoning and experiment. The history of religion is to them a myth, its various manifestations in different nations containing more or less beauty and sublimity, according to the sages, who embodied in writings the beliefs of their days. Every one who comes forth as a reformer, or a representative of his time, is a man to be admired, inasmuch as Nature shows its advance in him. All the ordinary herd of human beings who make no noise in the world are more or less rag-screens, and the monarchs who show no decided traits of domineering character are chiefly celebrated for their clothes. Strauss maintains that Jesus Christ was a great man, inasmuch as He was the first who was conscious that the 'Infinite dwelt in Him.' It dwells in all, but few are conscious of the great fact. Pantheism does not freeze out noble aspirations; on the contrary, it animates many to unite, to teach, to conquer, to rule, to leave their mark upon their age, and add one more phase to the development of Nature, which manifests itself in their lives. What Catholic philosophers call creation is an impossibility to them, inasmuch as anything that is thoroughly possible has a right to exist and must exist. It is the business of every one to feel his place in this world, to find out what he can do, and to do it bravely and boldly and unflinchingly. He is to be a good citizen, a generous friend, to follow the noblest dictates of human nature as far as he can; to beget children, give them a good education, and provide for them; but above all things to spend as much of his time and thought as he can in the pursuit of science, and to give his fellow-men the benefit of his discoveries. When he has done all this and dies, there is an end of him; his ashes go back to the bosom of his mother earth, unless some fanatical followers dispose of them otherwise. He has lived his life, and some others will come after him to continue his work. this way the primeval idea goes on developing itself, and we are all but so many emanations of it in our various positions.

This is about as fair a summary of Pantheism as we have been able to put together. There are many subsidiary distinctions and differences in the theories broached by its various advocates, but they all come

to one great conclusion. There is but one substance in this world, call it infinite, or finite, or what you like. There is no such thing as a spirit. What people generally call a soul is but a fine organisation of the nervous system. The laws of Nature are all necessary, and prayer is but a foolish exercise quite unsuited to a philosopher—as if the laws of Nature could be stopped because of some howling dervish that wants a shower of rain when all his neighbours want dry weather! Morality and honesty are good things, because they make mankind live more comfortably together; and revolutionists, unless they succeed, are all scoundrels, only fit food for grapeshot and guillotines.

This is, in brief, the grand gospel of modern times, which has many votaries. It is a travesty of Catholic philosophy, leaving out the distinction between the Creator and the creature, and is the substitute for religion which pleases the great minds of the present day. One of its greatest apostles, Cousin, after living for years in its profession, and teaching it to admiring hearers, returned towards the end of his life to the religion he had so long ignored, and the best commentary on his system was his diligence in going to hear Mass every day when he saw his end approaching.

Pantheists are the most generous opponents the Catholic Church has. They admire a great many of her tenets, and have no narrow supernatural prejudices against any of her doctrines if they see them fairly proposed to their consideration.

We will try to show the Catholic theory of development now, and see which system best satisfies the cravings of the human mind.

Catholics begin their system with the idea of a God, infinite in all His attributes. A Being who always is. He is in every way a Being after every manner of conception, and there never was and never will be a moment in which He is not. Existence and duration without beginning and without end. One who possesses all being and all perfections of a being in their fullest state of completeness is essentially one. Two such beings would be a contradiction in terms. This Being, or God, can never change, and yet has the full perfection of freedom, or divine liberty. His Oneness is not a barren one. 'Catholic doctrine admits that the most pure, simple, and undivided unity of the Godhead lies in its nature; but that this most simple nature is terminated by three real distinct subsistences, or Persons, who form the only true and living Infinite.'\* The first idea of God is that He is supremely intelligent. He understands Himself, and as such becomes the object of His own cognition. This knowledge is thoroughly adequate, and of the same nature as Himself, but distinct from God as conceiving. It becomes, there-These two Persons, then, fore, the  $\lambda_{0}$  or Word. love each other. 'It is the nature of love that the object loved should abide in the subject loving, in a state of feeling, or actively attractive state.' The result of this mutual love, beatifying both, and itself

<sup>\*</sup> De Concilio, 'Catholicity and Pantheism,' c. iv.

rejoicing in the beatitude, is a third termination, really distinct from the two others, yet the same. This, in as far as human words can convey the notion, is the idea of the Trinity. In fact, a Supreme Divine Being cannot be conceived as other than in this Trinity. This divine action terminates within the Trinity, and is complete in itself. As we cannot conceive God for a moment existing without understanding Himself, and the mutual love arising therefrom, so we cannot conceive any Person of the Trinity older or better than the other.

Besides immanent acts, philosophy recognises transient acts, or those which pass out of a Being, altering the term to which directed, and leaving the term whence proceeding unaltered. This notion conveys the idea of creation. Creation is all outside God, but He is present in it everywhere. Creation is distinct altogether from Him, and composed of perishable and contingent beings, varying in perfection according to His good pleasure. Our notion of a Supreme Being would, at first sight, bring us to suppose, with Leibnitz and Mallebranche, that He could create nothing but what was best; but the idea of finity is an obstacle to this, inasmuch as it is impossible to conceive any finite thing which is not indefinitely perfectible. God is free to create beings in any state of perfection He pleases, and manifest His love for them by perfecting them still further; so that besides the creative act, we require a conserving and an elevating act continually employed about finite things. The greatest perfection of the

creature has been accomplished by a union of human nature with the Divine Person of the Son of God, when the terms whereby He is distinguished from the Father and the Holy Ghost became the principles of actions, after their manner human, but in their worth divine. However, as Jesus Christ in becoming man did not mix His Divinity with human nature, an action which would destroy our idea of the Infinite, but remained always distinct from it, though animating it body and soul, there is no derogation here from His perfection, but a great elevation of human nature. God. again, did not assume a human person, but only human nature. How, then, was mankind to be made sharers, each individually or personally, in this great blessing? By the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, in which, by a unique act of His love, every child of Adam who is qualified by the means left at his disposal for this heavenly banquet can have a union of a most intimate kind with his God and Saviour.

As this means of elevating man should always exist until the end of time, He has organised a living speaking thing, called His Church, which is directed by the Holy Ghost, to teach all truth and practise all virtue. The Sacraments and the graces of sanctification can perfect the children of the Church until they become little less than the angels; and when their term of human existence is past they are taken up to a new and higher state of existence, where they enjoy for ever the blessed vision of the Godhead.

One can see at a glance that Pantheism is a travesty of Catholicity. The one underlying defect in it is the fusing of the Divinity with created matter, and thus destroying its very nature. There is only one thing required by a Pantheist to become a Catholic, and that is to have an idea of God as a Supreme Being, distinct from creation, loving His creatures, and perfecting them in order that they may come to enjoy His beatitude. That the Catholic system is the only consistent one on this hypothesis is plain enough; for she only presents the marks of His special formation as the organ of His truth, always indefectible, and teaching His revelation with no dubious voice, but with the full consciousness of certainty.

It is easily seen from the above parallel that Pantheism is the most consistent kind of philosophy outside that which is taught in the Catholic Church, and that Catholic philosophy is the only one a Pantheist can adopt when he sees the absurdity of his own.

# CHAPTER XXI.

### MATERIALISTS.

THERE is a grandeur in the pagan philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome which many readers of its pages fail to perceive at once. We see those great thinkers struggling upwards from the crude notions impressed upon the minds by external nature, purifying and elevating human conceptions until they reach those beautiful laws of reasoning which have survived the decadence of the civilisation they founded or adorned, and yet live in our schools when the groves in which they lectured are trodden by brigands, and the shrines in which they worshipped are being dug up as curiosities for museums. indubitable that Socrates and Aristotle would be great men had they lived in our day, and Seneca and Cicero will not lose in comparison with the greatest They went as high as human of modern writers. nature could take them, and the grand sublimity of their teaching was the longing for some superior light which would take them still higher. St. Paul saw an altar erected to the unknown God. and preached His existence and attributes to the Areopagus, he brought to Greek philosophy the one thing their sages longed for; and when St. Peter made the Cross glitter over the luxury and splendour of Augustan Rome, he filled the vacuum that long existed, and his successors fed the seed of his teaching with their virtues and their blood. hand-to-hand conflict with paganism, in Christianity seemed always to be worsted only to gain new strength and stability, prevented the development of Christian learning in the first ages of the Church. Apologists here and there put forth defences of the new faith; but their very name betokened that they sought toleration and fair play, and had to remove from pagan minds the mistaken

notions which prevailed with regard to their tenets. The tone of Catholic writings in these countries during the whole of the last and the beginning of this century was supremely apologetic. We had to ask pardon for being in the way of heresy, and to put forth a profusion of thanks when we were allowed to rear a barn-like house of worship in an obscure alley of some great city.

Heresy lorded it over all, and tolerated the amicable differences which by degrees began to divide her household. The Church of England could not well continue to persecute poor, mained, degraded Papists when she allowed Wesley to raise conventicles, and gave the hand of fellowship to the followers Her darling principle—the right of of John Knox. private judgment—the very corner-stone of the Reformation, had to be thought of practically. If every man was to take a Bible and judge for himself what he was to believe, why might not a Papist be allowed the same privilege? No wonder that this developed itself in the French Revolution, which Mr. Carlyle calls\* 'properly the third and final act of Protestantism;' and no wonder also that it developed such men as Mr. Carlyle himself and a great many other modern philosophers. The ancient philosophers longed for a light that would show them a way beyond rea-This light came, and men basked in its genial influence, and grew into Christian thinkers of the highest order in their day; but the 'right of private judgment' made an end of its blessings to a great

<sup>\*</sup> Lectures on Heroes, Library Edition, p. 279.

That men brought up in Protestantism, and having minds of their own, should strike out new paths of thought in philosophy and theology, was to be expected, seeing that even the safeguards of the Catholic Church, in her authoritative teaching, have not always been able to curb the froward bent of man's curiosity. No one of a Roman or Grecian school of thought could have imagined that men who gave their minds to metaphysical subtleties would have quibbled away not only the little supernatural light they had, but would have actually come to the conclusion of denying the existence of the It was reserved for a further develophuman soul. ment of the Reformation to see the writers of our day, like Tyndall, Huxley, Herbert Spencer, coolly and distinctly assert that all we know is matter, and that above matter human knowledge cannot go, unless it be affected by lunacy.

The school of thought most in vogue at present we have termed Materialism. It has other names, such as Positivism, Modern Thought, Civilisation, Progress, Liberalism, and a dozen more or less high-sounding titles, but the designation we have given is quite sufficient.

The lucubrations which have gone forth from the English press within the last few years have left the theories of Hobbes, Hume, and other eighteenth-century writers quite in the shade. Their scope is to confine themselves to merely physical things, and have nothing to do with subjects impervious to the senses. They not only deny, with the Pantheists,

that God is a personal Being distinct from created things, but they deny that man has a spiritual soul. No one ever saw, felt, heard, or smelt a spirit, therefore a spirit does not exist, would be too abrupt a way of putting their theory; yet it amounts to that. To all appearance they do not deny the existence of a soul; but they do so in their reasonings and con-The phenomena of Nature are our only clusions. concern, and thinking as well as writing is accounted for as the higher combination of nervous arrangements, or the 'conveyance of mental consciousness by brain-waves.' We shall give a summary of their theory in the words of Mr. Marshall, some quoted and some original: 'This is the new Gospel. religious hopes and fears, human interests and duties, being got rid of, we stand face to face with the one solid incontrovertible truth, majestic in its simplicity and power, Osmosis—i. e. filtration.' Having observed that Osmosis does not mean filtration, but that the creator of a new word has a perfect right to make his own Greek, the writer continues: 'Osmosis, then, is the new Gospel; or rather, everything is Osmosis. God, if there be a God, which there is not; man, only he is an aggregate of cells; human will, but that is only a succession of cellular vibrations—are all Osmosis.'\* This mystifying jargon might be left to itself, to spend its inanity on the fog it creates, if it did not do such immense harm to a number of people who always love to read deep

<sup>\*</sup> My Clerical Friends, p. 282; and Saturday Review, November 21, 1868.

books, and think that therein they find beatitude, like Hindoos who try to get to heaven by smothering themselves in the mud of the Ganges.

Now theories of Evolution, and disquisitions upon Nature pure, simple, and material, are very praise-worthy in themselves, and contain a great amount of truth, well reasoned and clothed in fine language. Indeed, there is no error so dangerous as that which contains the greatest amount of truth blended with the slightest modicum of falsehood. The writers, therefore, have, like the Pantheists, a substratum of truth, largely borrowed from Catholic philosophers, and upon it they built theories which lead 'nowhither,' as one of themselves graphically terms it.

It would be well if they confined themselves to Nature; but they push forward to something approaching a theory of persecution of all who will not allow the rising generation to be instructed in an unsectarian or godless fashion. Yes: let us say it, the horrible devilry of their theories is that they would rob us, by a barren fruitless system, of all our fathers died for and fought for in the history of Christendom. It is simply insufferable.

We know many most amiable accomplished gentlemen who simply take these theories for gospel. They have been born in heresy, with the right of private judgment given them as a birthright. They never heard of the superior guidance of a divine authority in matters of faith, except as an accursed thing, and they went on searching for truth, only to become more bewildered at every step. In an evil

day they alighted upon some of the works of our latter-day philosophers, and forthwith stopped their investigations, and rested in a quiet acceptance of this world and its transformations, leaving the next to look out for itself. For the kindness which these deserve, and for the pity which a Catholic philosopher must feel for those who never think for themselves, but follow what is fashionable in their day, we must have a few words to say about systems which ignore the existence of a soul as a spiritual substance, altogether distinct from matter, and destined, when once created, never to die.

There is nothing in Catholic theology against the theory of Evolution, as far as it is confined to material things. It would be next to heresy to deny that Adam's body was created or made from the slime of the earth, and that Eve was made out of a rib taken from his side; but whether the body of an ape could, by certain nameless additions and subtractions, come to be a fit receptacle for a soul, is a question which the Church has not decided up to the present. That the soul, not only of Adam, but of every human being, is created directly by God, and not inherited or transmitted by generation, is held by all Catholics as a truth.

The question is, does philosophy warrant this belief, or do the reasonings of sane men bring us up to the admission of this truth? We think so. A writer on this subject has well observed: 'We know, for instance, that the weight of brain in proportion to bulk is at least four times as great in man as in any

animal whatever. And considering the enormously complicated play of fantasy, of emotion, and of sensitive memory which is introduced by reason, it seems at least a reasonable supposition, though it can never be verified, that no apparatus of nerves and nervematter which would suffice for an irrational creature would be fine enough or extensive enough to provide that sensitive accompaniment which ever goes together with the independent spiritual action of the And is there not much violence and improbability in trying to imagine the conversion of an animal into a man? All things are possible to God; but it would surely require a clear revelation to make us dream of supposing that an adult animal, with all its organs adapted to the narrow circle of a rough and elementary sensitive experience, and fixed in the instinctive pursuit of a few objects of appetite, should suddenly vibrate with consciousness, and feel itself master of its choice, and knowing right and wrong. But all who do not admit that the spiritual soul can grow would, on the hypothesis that an ape suddenly became a man, be obliged to hold this. It is quite true that Mr. Darwin would not be affected by the absurdity of such a view, for he admits no soul in man that is different in kind from that of brutes. And so the debate seems to resolve itself into this: shall we maintain special creation and the spirituality of the soul, or continuous evolution, and confound intellect with sensation? The spirituality of the soul is the point at issue. If it can be shown that man's soul is proved by facts to be of a widely different kind from any power we know of in brutes, no amount of experiment and no analogical physiology will ever bridge over the chasm between the two, or show that the higher can issue out of the lower.'\*

The first reason given by the ordinary writers on this subject why the soul is distinct from the body is the power of forming ideas or abstractions. imagination can form an image of a scene enacted before it; an animal, to a certain extent, can do the same; and the memory may retain the impression a long time, just as a scene in real life can be transferred to canvas or to the pages of a book by an artist or a writer. But there is an operation far beyond that, which no material faculty can account for, and that is the faculty of generalising. . can abstract from time and space altogether. can give the reasons why an event happened, reason as to its result, and invent various combinations in which different effects might be procured. This no material thing can do, because it never has ex-Everything that exists does so in time or space, except the thoughts which we can form, and these abstract from both. Another way of putting You can photograph everything which exists materially, brains and all their perfections; but who could imagine the machine that might photograph a thought? The mind can enable an artist to paint a scene that will suggest thoughts, and this painting may be photographed; but what about the thought itself? Where is that? The letters of the

<sup>\*</sup> Dublin Review, July 1871, p. 23.

alphabet are only twenty-six, and yet see what thought can do with them in their various combinations! Any one that does not see a superior faculty in man, distinct from his body, which can arrange and suit material things to high purposes, far exceeding the scope of matter, must be very obtuse Mr. Darwin quotes instances of the power indeed. of instinct in animals which are very like the products of reasoning; but they are all capable of being explained; and even if they were not, they would only show that the mind of brutes is superior to what modern writers would allow to man. One thing is certain: no material stuff can generalise or draw conclusions, or assert a copula between two terms of a proposition, unless it be a thing divested of parts and incapable of destruction. To generalise is to have a form subjected in something superior to itself. generality exists in nature; but every generality is superior to all matter, which is sluggish and divisible, and therefore a thing in which a generality can be subjected is above all matter and incapable of division. To draw a conclusion from two generalities requires a comparison of both. If these were modifying qualities a soul could be blue and green at the same time, which we confidently assert is above all the properties of matter. Thoughts more diverse than blue and green can reside at the same time in a soul, and produce a conclusion by its vital power as diverse from both as they are from one another. more, contradictions cannot coexist in matter. A bar of iron, for instance, cannot be cold as ice and redhot at the same time. But qualities perfectly contradictory can reside in the soul perfectly distinct. It therefore cannot be matter. Take again the instance of hunger and thirst. A man suffering from these inclinations will not always satisfy himself, because he has some reason which tells him it is not expedient. He can if he will, but he does not. Why so? Because he has a mind which rules his inclinations, and is not matter. Then again there is the faculty of speech. Parrots may chatter and mocking-birds may imitate, but no being we know of can articulate thoughts in words except man.

But what are we doing? Giving reasons why man has a soul distinct from matter, and, inasmuch as it is indivisible, incapable of being destroyed naturally, and therefore everlasting. We know, and all human nature has known since the creation, that this soul will and must survive the death of the body. 'Non omnis moriar,' was said by an Epicurean, or material philosopher, Horace; and it would be well if our modern philosophers reached his height of human wisdom. Three or four big talkers, with a crowd of a thousand satellites, cannot upset the belief of six thousand years. Man has a soul. soul is immortal. We cannot spend time in more psychological arguments, but simply state what every one knows to be true. How is this soul to make its after-life be a happiness? Is it by hard negative philosophy? Let those look to it whom it may concern.

We give no advice as to converts from Material-

ism. They are able to look out for themselves; and if they do not come to be instructed as children to a father, let them stay where they are. They know nothing about a soul in this world, but they will know too much about it before they are five minutes in the next.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### DEISTS.

Our pages have been occupied for some time with a peculiar herd of erratic human beings-men who are born outside the supernatural, or who go out of it-who know nothing, and want to know nothing, except what concerns their bodies. we come a step nearer to Christianity: we treat of those who believe there is a God, and that they have a soul; who believe that God is a Supreme Being, endowed with all the perfections which believers have ever given to Him; and who believe also that they themselves are animated by a soul, and that this soul is immortal. It is a relief to emerge from the scum of human nature—nay, from a mystery. There is no greater mystery in human things than the existence of Atheists, Pantheists, and Material-Their theories must be, of course, at variance with their practice. As far as their teachings go, there is no such thing as morality, honesty, truth, honour, chastity, fidelity, or gratitude. These things are all the offspring of superstition. Revenge, cruelty,

murder (provided the perpetrator cannot be caught), drunkenness, blasphemy, breaking of promises, violation of sacred ties, seduction, robbery, are all the outcome of cellular motions and a natural consequence of their teaching. No man is free if he be a machine, and no one is accountable for his deeds if he be fated to perpetrate them. Yes, we leave this fetid sink of human depravity, and try to breathe in a purer atmosphere.

Deists have been variously defined by various authors. Some, like the Epicureans, believed that there was a Creator, who, having made the world, left it to itself, and did not give himself the trouble of looking after it. Others admit a Providence. Others, not believing in the immortality of the soul, see no necessity of admitting any Supreme Being who would concern Himself or us about a future state. Those who write and teach such theories may be classed among the Materialists or Atheists, for a deity who would not be all-wise and all-merciful is no deity at all.

Restricting the term Deist to all those who believe there is a God, and that He is eternal, and that He exercises a providence in our regard, and will reward the good and punish the wicked hereafter, but who has given us no revelation, either spoken or written, and leaves us to our natural lights to find out our salvation, we come to a large class of well-meaning people, on whom a little instruction will not be thrown away.

Is it consistent with anything like a kind Provi-

dence to cast rational creatures upon this world, and give them no light whereby their steps could be guided in the paths of righteousness? We think If man were born, like the young of animals, capable of picking up his food the moment he entered this world, and with a cloak of natural fur to protect him from cold, we might presume that he was also provided with an instinct capable of guiding him in all that was necessary for his life here and his existence hereafter. In the whole range of natural history there is no being so helpless as an infant just born. Weak in natural faculties, needing all the care which a fond mother or nurse can bestow, he is put upon this world in an utterly helpless state. He has a mind, but cannot use it; and when the light of reason dawns, passions spring up with it, or have manifested themselves before it, which require a more powerful curb to regulate them than reason is endowed with. If we acknowledge, then, a Divine Being who has been pleased to let man be born in this state, we must also acknowledge that He has made provision for it, and that, seeing his helplessness and his needs, He has taken care to supply them. The child has parents or friends, who will look after him in infancy; and here we can see the beauty of divine revelation as explained by the Church, which does not allow intercourse between the sexes except where this provision is made for its consequences. Just as the strength of nature is insufficient for the child, so is the light of reason insufficient for the adult. As the tender limbs are

unable to support the little body until full natural growth and exercise enable them to do so, the feeble mind is unable to guide or restrain the passions until strengthened by grace and made capable by the habits of virtue for such a work. There is, therefore, an a priori call for a special grace, over and above nature, in order to enable a child to fulfil even natural duties.

There is scarcely any one thing so clearly evident from the history of the human race as the inadequacy of unaided reason for the guidance of man in the moral order. We speak not of man merely in his savage state. His passions invariably draw his reason after them; and the subtlety wherewith he is endowed is only used to give palliatives to his outraged conscience when he commits a crime against the natural law. We speak of man cultivated. take the natural man in his most perfect state. instance the Greek, the Roman, and the other pagan philosophies which have enlightened the world. We appeal to those standards of truth, justice, and rectitude which would put many of our modern thinkers, who have had the benefit of the light of Christianity, to shame, and say decidedly that none of these systems is sufficient for man's guidance. Philosophers have not yet agreed as to the first principles of human thought. Are ideas innate or acquired? Must we begin to reason from a Cartesian doubt? Must our reasoning be analytic or syn-Have we to descend from generals to particulars, or are we to arrive at generals by a process

of sufficient induction? Is our mode of argument in metaphysics to proceed on the system of ontologists or psychologists? The Church has decided something; but, if we emancipate philosophy from the Church, is there a fixed and received system of even the rudiments of reasoning? Not one. Here, then, is the grand human race—the inventors of so many wonders, the scientists who have yoked fire to their chariots, and made the lightning their messengersyes, here they are, after six thousand years of existence, without having agreed even on the first principles of a system of thought. We cease to wonder now at the egregious errors which have found followers, and at the consistency of those thinkers who. seeing reason so impotent, have denied its existence altogether, or called it a tide of 'brain-waves.'

The doctrine and teaching of the Catholic Church show that ample provision has been made by God in all ages for the preservation of the faith and the direction of morals. Not only was this provision made, but it rested in a visible audible organ, which all who wished might recognise, and which could not err in delivering its judgment. This inerrancy has been now called infallibility. It means that God has given a body of doctrine, and that He has appointed an infallible exponent of that doctrine. We may cavil as we will as to the supposition that any human being should be so endowed. That he was de facto since the very creation, and that he is now, is all we have to call attention to. It is impossible to conceive that the human race could other-

wise be provided with the means of salvation, since the things that belong to salvation are above human ken, and since human reason, even within its own sphere, has only arrived at a jumble of contradictions.

'What do we understand by the word "infallibility" with respect to persons? The word etymologically means inerrancy—that is, that he who has authority to judge any particular cause, or to expound or define a law, in the last resort is legally incapable of error, his judgment or decree or definition being irreformable, i.e. it cannot be corrected True, the legislators of the country or amended. may be of opinion that the judgment or opinion of the supreme judicial authority was not that which they intended when framing the law; but, notwithstanding this, they cannot constitutionally remove or annul it: their only remedy is to alter or repeal the law. The judgment itself stands for ever, and is operative so long as the particular law remains on the statute-book.'\*

We give this description of infallibility, as it states exactly, in a way to suit material minds, the nature of an authoritative exponent of a divine or human law. In the case of the exponent of divine law there is always an assistance from on high, whether immediate or mediate, which is sure to keep him right in his pronouncements. Did God establish infallible mouthpieces for His law from the very beginning until now? He did; and we proceed to point out the fact.

<sup>\*</sup> Cathedra Petri, by Hon. Colin Lindsay, vol. ii. p. 760.

Adam possessed this prerogative assuredly before his fall; after the fall he only retained the half of it; that is to say, he could be personally sinful, but officially he could not teach wrong. It is well to keep this distinction in mind. Another thing is that infallibility never rested in writings of any kind; it was always in a living man. It might be conferred upon many, such as the prophets and great saints, as a reward for personal sanctity; but its official residence, so to speak, was irrespective of personal virtue or personal merit of any kind, though excluding neither.

'To Adam succeeded "the sons of God;" that is, probably his successors through the line of Seth,' of whom Enoch and Noah are specially mentioned. Adam died in A.M. 930. Seth and Enoch lived together; indeed, Enoch was born 170 years before Adam died. Enoch was translated seventy years before the birth of Noah; but Methusalem, who was born 300 years before Enoch passed, lived until Noah was 599 years old, or to the year of the Deluge. have thus an unbroken line of patriarchs, all mouthpieces of God's primitive revelation, until the death of Noah in A.M. 2006. It is well to append St. Paul's estimate of Noah. 'By faith Noe, having received an answer concerning those things which as yet were not seen, moved with fear, framed the ark for the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world; and was instituted heir of the justice which is by faith' (Heb. xi. 7). The gift possessed by Adam was thus preserved.

Abraham was born two years after the death of Noah, and if Shem (who did not die until 2151 A.M., according to Calmet's chronology, or seventy-five years after the call of Abraham) was the same as Melchisedec, as some commentators maintain, we see how the gift was handed down, even without an interregnum. It is easy to see how the authority in all matters passed from Abraham to Moses if we allow of an interregnum (when somebody must have possessed authority, although there is no record of it), between the death of Ephraim and the call of Moses, of 102 years.

There are two or three incidents worthy of mention in the descent of the heads of the ancient Church. Noah made a prediction about his sons, which was confirmed. Jacob stole the birthright by fraud, and yet it was confirmed. Ephraim received it, although his father Joseph thought to change the old man's hands at the blessing. These are curious matters, and would form the subject of a very interesting chapter by themselves.

Moses was the first who committed the law to writing, but he did not leave the writing to speak for itself. He appointed the Sanhedrim, with Aaron at its head, as the infallible expounders of the written law. As we are supposed to be writing for Deists, we only claim a historical value for these assertions at present, pointing out that 'Moses was born, A.M. 2433, of Amram and Jochabed, the grandchildren of Levi, who had lived thirty-three years with Isaac, and Isaac had lived fifty years with Sem. From

this and the two foregoing tables, it appears that Moses has written nothing in his sacred history but what was then still fresh in the memory of men."

This privilege was enjoyed by the Sanhedrim, and resided in the high-priest until it was taken away by Jesus Christ and passed into the Church He had instituted. He Himself said: 'The Scribes and Pharisees have sitten in the chair of Moses. All things whatsoever they shall say to you observe and do; but according to their works do ye not' (Matt. xxiii. 2, 3). Here is a singular confirmation and, at the same time, a valuable distinction. It did not matter much about their deeds, but their teaching was infallible.

Another singular confirmation of this fact can be culled from the Gospel of St. John. There was a council called after the miracle of the raising of Lazarus to see what was to be done. 'The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation. But one of them named Caiphas, being high-priest that year, said to them: You know nothing. Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke not of himself; but being the high-priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation. And not only for the

<sup>\*</sup> Reeve's History of the Bible, end of Third Age.

nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed' (John xi. 47-52). Caiphas could not speak falsely, because he spoke from the chair of Moses.

'It will probably be asserted that the high-priest condemned our Lord to death. True; granting that this would be a subject of infallibility, he did not oppose the law; on the contrary, he fulfilled it, and involuntarily completed it; for, by means of his sentence, he caused the true Lamb, who had been foreshadowed by the countless legal sacrifices under the law to be offered; and by that event brought about the inauguration of the Gospel, which from the beginning was intended to succeed the Mosaic dispensation. Doubtless the conduct of the highpriest was most wicked, but infallibility is not impeccability; the intention may be bad indeed, but the sentence remains infallible and irreformable.'\* There is another answer generally given to the difficulty, as to the jurisdiction of the high-priest having terminated as soon as Jesus was arraigned before him; but with that we have nothing to do at present.

That this authority passed to the Church in the person of St. Peter and his successors, and remains to the present day, and will continue for ever, is the Catholic doctrine. There is, then, provided in the Church a guide and an abundant supply of aids supplementary to reason to help people heavenwards. Let Deists master this one notion, and the remainder comes very easily to be understood.

<sup>\*</sup> Cathedra Petri, vol. ii. p. 780.

Deists will make objections that this provision has not been made for the great number of pagans who never heard of the Gospel. It is not our business to answer this difficulty just now. All we shall say is to those who object outside their present subject: 'Never mind all those pagans. You are not accountable for them, neither are we. You have heard of the Gospel; see you don't become worse than those unfortunate pagans by rejecting it.' When people make difficulties that do not affect them personally, they only look for an excuse for not doing what grace and duty call upon them to perform.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

# SCEPTICS.

THERE are some persons to be met with who deserve to be called sceptics. They can believe nothing. They doubt, they hesitate, they do not know, they are uncertain, they cannot tell; it may be so, and it may not be so; and they run through a whole catalogue of similar dubious sounds. A sceptic, pure and simple, is a being very hard to manage. Trying to bring him to argument is like trying to hold an eel by the tail. He is sure to slip away from you when you think you have a hold of him. You must first see if a man admits anything at all, either natural or supernatural, to be true. Some there are who do not, and arrive at their con-

clusions in a sort of philosophical fashion; philosophers, for instance, who maintain that there is no bridge yet invented between the subjective and the objective. In their hypothesis you can only reason about the phenomena of your mind, but cannot be certain of anything which may be supposed to exist outside it. Berkley repudiates the title of sceptic, and yet his philosophy leads to nothing else. It is the same with nearly all idealism. The course to be adopted with individuals of this sort is to see what admissions they will make with regard to their consciousness. It is better to write these down, because they are apt to deny them when they find that they lead to inconvenient conclusions.

Cogito ergo existo goes a very little way, but it is something. 'What do you think? Do you feel conscious that one and two are different?' 'Yes.' 'Do you feel conscious that there is some difference between right and wrong?' 'Well, I don't know.' 'Supposing I struck you a blow on the face, would not that be different from my giving you a five-'Certainly.' 'Where does the differpound note? 'That is easy to see.' 'O yes; you ence consist?' see the note, and you know it can buy you something; and you know that you must get something objective in the way of food, or else your subjectivity will soon cease to cogitate. Admit that much. Very well, we have now got to something. Then do you not feel a pleasing recollection when you have done good, and a troublesome one when you have done evil?' 'Yes.' 'What is the cause of this difference?' This sort of questioning will lead on by degrees to the consciousness of accountability for our actions, and to the admission that there is a Being who can see us in the dark and in private, and who will never forget anything we do, and whom we can never deceive. The psychological proof of the existence of God is so easy, if you get a premiss at all from which to start, that it requires very little trouble to arrive at it. When once such a fact is admitted, try to make the person feel certain of it. Let every doubt as to the fact be put aside before you go a single step further. Leave nothing hazy or dubious in the way at all; because, after seventeen syllogisms in full form, the hazy idea will crop up and spoil the whole work. Explain certainty if you will; but having a single certainty admitted, keep within that line. From the certainty that a God exists it is easy to pass to a Providence, and thence to the supernatural system; and the submission to authority, when reason falls short, will complete the work, if it is to be completed.

Sceptics of the school of Bayle and the Encyclopædists are very rare at present. They throw doubts upon received verities, turn sacred things into ridicule, and sneer at the credulity of men wiser than themselves. It is difficult to meet those; as an Anglican bishop said of Gibbon, 'Who can answer a sneer?' D'Alembert said of Bayle: 'He doubts or makes sport of everything,'—'Il doutait ou se moquait de tout.' Even Voltaire said of him: 'His greatest enemies are obliged to acknowledge that

there is not a single line in all his works which can be considered as an evident blasphemy against the Christian religion; but his greatest admirers have to confess that, in his controversial articles, there is not a single page which does not lead the reader to doubt and infidelity.' Another writer observes of him: 'As cynical in his expressions as pyrrhic in his belief, he is as equally prolific in obscenities as in errors.' With such men there is little to be done. Grace alone, and that of a powerful kind, can touch them and make them turn their weapons upon them-It is to be feared that, having abused noble selves. natural gifts, and prostituted them to the service of sin and immorality, they have so far perverted them that they become the prey of their worst passions, and generally die as they have lived-unloved and unregretted even by their friends. Let others learn by such experiences.

Sceptics in our day are the growth of a different soil. The seeds are the same—a quickness to perceive defects and an inability to avoid them; a spirit of fault-finding, that feels it has made an advance in perfection by discovering flaws in the accepted perfections of others. This is the kind of seed from which sceptics are produced. The soil of modern life is very favourable to the growth of scepticism.

It is easy to remark the difference which exists between the children one meets in schools and nurseries to-day, and those one was accustomed to in childhood. They look so wise and precocious, as soon as they are able to walk, that we may not wonder in the next generation if babies prefer a piece of tobacco to the gaudiest bawble. In the days of our childhood we were credulous; we imagined that fairies gambolled in every hedge and fort, and that ghosts lurked in every dark corner. We loved to hear, with childish wonder, those accounts of goblins, giants, and enchanters, which were read or recited to us by our nurses. Fairies have run away from the whistle of the steam-engine (no wonder!), and the glare of the gas-jet has completely banished both ghosts and banshees. It is, perhaps, not good to frighten children with buggaboos and pookss, or make them tremble at imaginary dangers, when alone in the dark; but still, the remedy which would altogether banish the supernatural and bring all to a matter-of-fact way of thinking is worse, a great deal, than the disease. Why take away innocent and harmless delusions until we can put something better in their place? We remember the delight with which we read the Arabian Nights, Gulliver's Travels, and the Adventures of Jack the Giant-Killer; when we innocently believed them all, and fancied that genii might come and carry us off to valleys of diamonds, or that a strolling tinker might have the lamp of Aladdin in his budget. These thoughts were ours when we were older than some maidens who now can criticise the plot of a fashionable novel, or are preparing to be authors of one themselves. Credulity is on the wane, and it is impossible to return again to simplicity. Children are disgusting enough in Engnd and Ireland, but the American juveniles can cture their grandfathers. An anecdote which a ry worthy priest once told is worth recording. hen he was a child of about ten years of age he gan to see the nonsense of fables, and turned his oughts to very serious matters. There was a cusm in his school of questioning everything, because e master had a theory about forming the minds his pupils for a species of critical acumen. There as a custom, however, in the family of reading me few chapters from the lives of the Saints for e children before they went to bed, and the two istoms clashed in the following manner. It hapened, one winter's evening, when the due modicum hagiography had to be taken, that he was not uch in the humour to profit by it. His sister read oud the life of some Saint, and in the course of e narrative an extraordinary miracle turned up. ar youngster at once declared that he did not beeve a word of it. His mother took a note of his servation, and, as soon as the reading was over, e called him to her side for, as he thought, a marnal salute before retiring. 'You said you did not slieve that story a while ago,' observed the mother. To more I did,' replied he manfully. She caught m by the top of his head, and gave him a smart nock against the wall. 'Do you believe it now?' ), I do, I do!' Another knock. 'Do you believe it w?' 'Boo-hoo—I do, I do!' When this process as repeated for about the fifth time he was allowed retire; and we heard him confess in after-life that when he was in duty and judgment obliged to doubt of things and deny them, he always feared his mother's hand might come from the grave, and exorcise the spirit of doubt which seemed to take possession of him. If some such process of training were put into operation with the youth of the present generation, we should have fewer sceptics in the world.

There are some who say they cannot believe because they cannot understand. Now if a person asked them did they understand how to make a watch, or could they foretell the next eclipse of the moon, perhaps they would say they could not. And why? Because they do not understand these things. Well, then, it is not necessary that people understand what they believe; all they have to do is to trust to those who do understand them; and as they would depend upon a good watch because it kept good time, so let them trust to those who have no interest in deceiving them, and observe what they teach; and as they look out for an eclipse when they see it foretold and marked in an almanac, so let them trust their souls to those whom they know to be their proper keepers. There is no use in reasoning with such people: only give them light to see their way through a few childish difficulties, and grace-which does not depend upon mind or reasoning-will do the rest.

Others cannot believe because they cannot see. If we saw things we could not believe them. The proverb says 'seeing is believing;' but the proverb is wrong. We believe what we cannot see, on the

authority of those who have seen it; as people who were never in Rome or Constantinople believe that there are such cities, on the credit of those who have seen them, and certify to the same.

'We cannot decide where so many differ,' is a common excuse with a lower order of sceptics. There would be something in this if it came from a Hindoo who had been evangelised by a Catholic, an Anglican, a Wesleyan, and a Mormon, one after the other. We can pity the poor bewildered pagan who has been subject to such religious typhoons; but there is another rule for those who live in the midst of various Christians, and have an opportunity of judging more carefully. One thing we would remind them of, and it is that no two Catholics ever differed about what they were to believe, and no two of any other sect ever agreed. That is enough for their objection; and if they doubt this too, they will next doubt that two and two make four, or that we have only two eyes and one tongue.

There is another class of sceptics who are too much immersed in worldly concerns, and have very clear ideas of business and temporal things, but who seldom give a thought of any kind to spiritual matters. These things do not seem to concern them. They are like the Yorkshire member of Parliament, who puffed forth into the lobby of the House of Commons, escaping from a creed question which was being discussed inside, exclaiming: 'Bless my soul, what a fuss those fellows inside are making! I have lived sixty years in this world, and

never knew the difference between one creed and another.' 'Bedad,' dryly remarked the late Vincent Scully, 'you won't be five minutes in the next world when you'll know all about it.' This queer contretemps fairly staggered the burly sceptic. Persons of this description may be called negative sceptice. They do not know enough about any spiritual maxim to be able to doubt positively about it. It requires a certain amount of real knowledge to arrive at a positive doubt; but where there is none, we can expect nothing but darkness instead of a respectable half-transparent fog. The first thing to be done with such sceptics as these is to make them take as much interest in the affair of their soul as they do in their dinners or their trade. They will then inquire, and perhaps some clear atmosphere may present itself to them, as a cloud or two begins to be removed. People of this nature, even in possession of the faith, are poor subjects.

The next and most difficult class of sceptics is composed of those who take a real interest in things belonging to faith—who are serious inquirers, but who meet difficulties at every step. They ask questions which do not concern themselves, and because the answers are not always satisfactory they give up inquiry, and settle into a general mood of doubting about all revelation. Now those who expect the poor light of reason to be able to guide them in all that concerns salvation would do well to remember the words of the poet:

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'Superior faculties are set aside; Shall their subservient organs be my guide? Then let the moon usurp the rule of day, And winking tapers show the sun his way.' Dryden.

At the same time, it may be observed that for all who inquire earnestly for light upon things divine, and who do not look for difficulties as a justification for non-belief, there is always to be had a solution to every difficulty that can be raised, enough to satisfy any reasonable man, in things which are so far above our comprehension. These answers will appear in their proper places in the succeeding chapters; it will suffice now to say that they are forthcoming. One who is in earnest will take what truth he can get, and stick to it; one who is not will be glad of an excuse for doubting what he has hitherto believed.

We have treated sceptics rather unceremoniously. Indeed, we are not sorry, for we do not think them deserving of aught else. Reasonable men, who have not yet arrived at certainty, we sympathise with; but men who set reason at defiance, and are not qualified for a lunatic asylum, because their brains are not of such consequence as to make their loss felt, do not deserve any consideration. Ridicule is not a lawful weapon even in confuting errors, but it is sometimes the only weapon whose thrusts can be felt. Controversialists have generally used it, and its effect has been to convince shallow philosophers that there does exist something in the objective order.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

#### SENTIMENTALISM.

THE erroneous doctrines which inventors systematise or formulate are far from exhausting the various byways into which the human mind wanders in its search for truth. There are some whose system of religion cannot be brought under any definite or well-known heading. Some go so far as to reject creeds altogether; some pick and choose from this creed and that; and others strike out an original theory of their own, to which their faith seems completely assimilated.

Individuality in religious matters arises from two sources-pride of intellect and peculiarity of taste. The first source does not imply a very superior order of mind, but a mind with a touch of originality about it, which has no opportunity of exhausting itself upon inventions. The possessor is occupied in business or in trade, or perchance in a profession which takes up his time. He has not much leisure for reading extensively, but he has time for thinking. He finds objections very powerful obstacles, and knows not how to remove them; and to calm his spirit, he strikes out a system of his own. This he makes the centre of his mental universe, and all that he reads or hears has to revolve around it and become its satellites. Argue a matter with him and he will become pugnacious, then captious, then Tally states anew his pet theory, and assures you that both of you were of accord from the beginning, but were not aware of the fact until he discovered it. Such people continue in their self-satisfied groove until some rude shock, either in the natural or supernatural order, throws them off the rails, when they have to pick up the sherds of their shattered theory as best they may, and have recourse to some well-trained mind to put them into better order by a new process.

Of the same class might be numbered those who feel assured of salvation. They get a fixed notion into their heads that their repentance has been accepted of the Lord, and that they are on the straight Whence this assurance came they road to heaven. cannot tell. They can give no reasonable account of its origin or existence, only that they feel itthey feel the joy of a newly-awakened soul; they feel the sanctity of the Sabbath; they feel the beauty of certain hymns and the sanctity of certain preachers. Reasoning is cast away altogether, and this sentiment is called upon to do duty for research, study, reflection, and instruction. So strong is the feeling that it drives them to street-preaching, writing pamphlets, and interrogating their neighbours on their spiritual state. There is an inward conviction of the security of every step they take, and they can even die so without the slightest misgiving. Such a state of mind seems akin to the hallucinations of a madman; and yet those who are so affected are

perfectly shrewd and practical in all the duties of social life. There is one index of unsoundness in the whole matter, and that is that they must be perpetually justifying themselves. Any one who feels called upon for a justification of his ways of thought is sure to fall under the censure of the proverb, qui s'excuse s'accuse; and if he could thus be brought to have misgivings, it would be a good step towards further improvement.

It is dangerous to unhinge such minds by outward difficulties. All their errors spring from within; and unless one begins with the inward feeling to put it right, all the time given to argument is lost.

Others, again, have sentiments from outside. The most harmless species of this sentimentality is to be found amongst those who are charmed with certain kinds of music, beautiful ceremonial, peculiar styles of churches, and even bindings of prayerbooks. They feel that there is a species of godliness in all the exterior manifestations of devotion which moves their souls heavenwards. Whatsoever does this must be true religion. They feel it so. Such a disposition cannot be better brought to an account than by a parable lately published by Father Gallwey. He says:\*

'It may be useless here to subjoin a parable, if I may so term it, or a description of a scene which, if it never happened, yet is within the range of possibilities, with a view to illustrating how little devo-

<sup>\*</sup> Tuelve Lectures on Ritualism, Lecture IX. part i. p. 388.

tional feelings can be accepted as proof of the validity of Sacraments.

'Christian marriage is a Sacrament. Let us assist in spirit at the marriage of Alicia, daughter of the Vicar of Hampstead-super-Mare (I hope there is no such place on the map), with Herr Friedrich, an Old Catholic from Ratisbon. The marriage is solemnised in the church of St. Jerome.\*

'As soon as "day-spring began to bathe the mountains" the parishioners were on the alert, preparing triumphal arches and festoons, while the leading ladies of the congregation devoted themselves to adorning the interior of the beautiful church of St. Jerome. Within the chancel "hothouse plants and flowers were scattered in lavish profusion in all directions. Lilies of the rarest kinds and exquisite perfume lay in beds of moss in glittering vases on every available space." The centre of this exquisite scene was, of course, "the stately high altar and shrine, gorgeous with its marbles and carvings," and "its glittering tabernacle in a deep recess of Early English work." "Carbuncles and crystals glittering in the lavished flow of the sunbeams enhanced the effect." "The service was to be the solemn grand High Mass, according to the Church of England rite in the Sarum Missal. Every old English ceremony was carefully and lovingly reproduced." "Priests, deacons, and subdeacons, thu-

<sup>• &#</sup>x27;Most of the phrases in the following description are borrowed from a description of the Feast of the Ascension in the Church Times, June 14, 1878' (F. Gallwey's note).

rifers and choristers, were all members of the neighbouring community; while two secular priests, in splendid copes, acted as rulers of the choir." The service, for pomp and splendour, it would be impossible to describe in a few words. The crowds of visitors were all supplied with lighted wax tapers; the altar was ablaze. Amid clouds of incense, music hushed and still, the Sacred Presence was elevated, the deep bell tolled, and well-tuned cymbals clanged upon the still and silent air. We feel safe in saying that none of the worshippers will ever forget the intense privilege, the foretaste of heavenly joy, which they enjoyed, when, upon the profound silence of the perfumed air, the voice of Father Bede "sang softly from the choir, 'O Saving Victim, O Saving Victim!" and a boy's clear voice continued, "'Slain to bless! Slain to bless!" But perhaps the most impressive moment in the exquisite and solemn service was when the Vicar came forward in his rich cope of gold and silver, with the gladness of his full heart betrayed by his moistened eyes and faltering voice, to address a few words to the audience, and pointed out to them what splendour and what real devotion could be found in the service of the Church of England, and how superfluous it was to look elsewhere for aids to piety. When, after this, he begged the prayers of all present for his beloved child, we believe we are safe in saying that few eyes were dry among the crowd that filled St. Jerome's. der that when, at the close of the service, the bride ran up to him, and, falling into his arms, said, in a

transport of feeling, "O papa, will Romanists after this say ever again that we have no true Sacraments and no real priests?" he could only answer, with a sigh, "Father, forgive them."

'The bride's feelings told her that she had received a true Sacrament; that the chancel was filled with true priests; and that St. Jerome's was the true Church of Christ, "no other than the gate of heaven and vestibule of God," abounding in all the treasures of grace; and no doubt there were many there present whose feelings gave the same evidence.

'The wedding breakfast followed, and helped to confirm the evidence offered by the feelings in favour of Anglican Sacraments and Anglican Orders. in this happy persuasion a few bright days rolled by. Alas, they were too few; for, lo, a cloud was seen to gather on the Vicar's brow, and tears were seen in the eyes of his wife, and a whisper of ill-omen was passing round about St. Jerome's that some very dismal news had come about the marriage. days later it became known that Herr Friedrich had to interrupt the joys of his honeymoon to appear before a police magistrate on the charge of bigamy. It was asserted in the court that he had already a true and real wife, far away in Vaterland, and that the beautiful scene in St. Jerome's was a criminal offence. True to her partner, the bride Alicia went to the court; and as the depositions were read and the statements made, evidently heard them with no sentiment but pity and forgiveness for the blinded witnesses. "Fear not, Friedrich!" she said from

time to time, as things looked more grave. She knew what she was going to do. At a convenient moment she took the court by surprise, and poured out suddenly a short and impassioned argument, which she expected would set the question at restfor ever. "0 sir," she exclaimed, addressing the magistrate, "had you been at St. Jerome's, had you seen with your eyes, had your cars heard what we heard and what we saw, you would dismiss these calumnies with a smile. Nothing could stifle the voice crying aloud within you, that God had joined Friedrich and Alicia, and that no man can put them asunder." She said no more. The unerring voice of the feeling she fondly assumed The infallible feelings had settled the question. have spoken; the case is ended. But the dried-up magistrate, after one slight electric shock from the surprise, went on as if he had been a fossil. He was very sorry that he had not had the pleasure of witnessing the celebration at St. Jerome's. Though not partial to imitation of Roman rites, he had no doubt but it was very beautiful. His business, however, was to hear the evidence of witnesses; and from the evidence before him, it was his painful duty to send Herr Friedrich for trial on a charge of bigamy. The cruel charge was subsequently proved to be only too true. The bride Alicia returned to her father's vicarage, sincerely pitied by all who had assisted at the high celebration at St. Jerome's; and as she shortly after was married to another, we must conclude that she was at last herself convinced, in spite of the testimony of her feelings, that during the celebration at St. Jerome's no true Sacrament was administered.

'This parable is not as useless and superfluous as many might imagine. The argument, "our Orders must be valid, because we feel that our Sacraments are true, and our priests real priests," is far more widespread and more popular among Ritualists than any argument drawn from historical research; and it is absolutely necessary to try to make it clear to your Anglican minds, that to admit the Orders of Father Cuthbert or Father Bede to be valid because we feel that they are real priests, and that they administer true Sacraments, would be like recognising the pretensions of the celebrated Claimant, because his wife and a certain number of those who have risked their money in his cause feel him to be the long-lost son.'

This beautiful parable settles the matter of feeling.

There is another school of sentiment which has nothing to do with those we have spoken of: it is the poetical school of freethinking. Heretics and their followers have been given rather to hard arguments and text-quoting than to poetry; but they prepared the way for another school of thinkers. Men with large Catholic feelings, who see in the face of Nature all that is beautiful, and give concrete existence to such ideas as humanity, equality, philanthropy, and progress, have founded a very dangerous school of sentimental piety. To them the prophets are so many poets, beautifying the heart of humanity. Our Lord is pictured as the most gentle, amiable,

and sympathetic of human beings. The hills of Judea and the traditions of the Hebrew race gave Him His inspirations, and He founded a school of poetry which taught equality and philanthropy. This insidious way of getting rid of the supernatural by fine phrases has been long used by many undesigning and designing men. Of the former we have Shelley and the Lake poets. Their verses flow sweetly, and Nature smiles from their pages. world becomes a species of dreamland; and although it sometimes puts on its terrors, as in the Muse of Goethe, it is generally seen best in autumn evenings and calm moonlights. The chief exponent of the designing sentimentalists is Ernest Renan. de Jésus has all the excellences of a system in which a glowing eulogy of our Lord's human nature is intended as a disguised negation of His Divinity. All sentiment is despicable to a good reasoner; but then the majority of people are the very reverse of good reasoners; and as most have a fund of sentimentality in their nature, they welcome the food supplied for it by a master-hand, and overlook, in its grace and elegance of style, the deadly poison which it conceals. The difficulty in coping with this form of error consists in the fact that it so nearly imitates truth.

The Catholic Church does not condemn the poetic aspect of religion; on the contrary, she encourages it, consecrates it, and has her temples of fame, in which it finds a well-chiselled niche. To take up the ornamental aspect of faith and practice,

and make it the only thing worth admiring, to the exclusion of the substance it has been intended to adorn, is an error as grave as it is hollow. the most ingenious method which the devil has invented in every age, for undermining the Gospel, is the imitation of some portion of it to the exclusion of the rest. In the beginning, and during the first ages, of Christianity the devil acted in a rude vulgar He took possession of people, made them foam at the mouth, work in convulsions, speak strange languages, and do other preternatural things of a most unbecoming nature. The Christian exorcists nullified this by using fasting and prayer to expel him. He invented a travesty of the Sacraments in the ages of faith. Before people had found out spiritualism and rationalism, he promised preternatural effects on the placing of certain signs. This was called magic. We smile now at the laws passed against sorcerers, and the burning of ugly old women as witches; but did we know the nature of the errors of those days, we might not consider them so foolish.

The tendency of error since the sixteenth century has been purely human, and the devil suits his tactics to the change in men's dispositions. He is no longer the rude being he was in the beginning. He is now all politeness and culture. His place is in the drawing-room, in polite literature, and in fiction; and as if these were not enough, he has invented a new religion called Spiritualism, wherein learned men and women are charmed by fooleries and bad gram-

mar in darkened rooms. The finest piece of craft yet traceable to him is to get people to deny his personal existence. What infernal rejoicing there must be in hell, when those who fall into the lastnamed error find out that he does exist, when they cannot escape from his power! The force of sentiment can no further go.

# CHAPTER XXV.

JEWS.

THERE has sometimes been a friendly feeling between Jews and Catholics when they could put political and religious matters aside. There is no doubt that a bitter feeling was left in the minds of the first Christians consequent on the persecutions which originated in the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and added St. Stephen, St. James, and others to the When Titus destroyed number of the martyrs. Jerusalem, and the Jews were scattered over the face of the earth, never to be a nation again, the persecutions of the pagans were directed against both Jews and Christians, and seldom distinguished between them. When Christianity became all-powerful in the world at the time of Constantine, the Jews began to suffer. We can easily understand how fanatical Christians would persecute the children of those who shouted for the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. and said to Pilate, 'His blood be upon us and upon

our children.' Moreover, as Bible Christians in America quoted the curse of Canaan to justify them in keeping the negroes in slavery, so might legislators in Spain and other countries of Europe quote a warrant for the persecution of the Jews who might happen to live in their dominions. We remember hearing a Chinese in California, in an altercation with a Jew, cry out, 'You bad man, you kill melikan Now if such an idea could reach the man's Josh!' mind of a Chinese, it is no wonder that it should take full possession of the mind of a Christian. At the same time, reflecting Catholics know very well that our Lady was a Jewish maiden. Our Lord Himself chose to be born of her, and all His Apostles and first followers were Jews. The strongest testimony to the truths of Christianity, from a historical point of view, comes from the existence of the Jews and their careful custody of the sacred records. them a great deal; and although their behaviour at the time of the Crucifixion was most cruel and unwarrantable, yet it was fraught with great blessings to the world; and as our Lord Himself asked His eternal Father for their forgiveness-'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do'-it would not be unbecoming in us Christians, whom our Divine Founder has taught by word and example to forgive our enemies, if we took the part of mercy and forgave them also. We candidly acknowledge that many Christian kings and Christian prelates too have treated the Jews badly, in every age of the Church, and that even in our Liturgy, on Good

Friday, they have an exceptional sad preference in the prayers which are sung for the conversion of those who do not yet believe. All these persecutions have passed away; and as the hand of fellowship is stretched out to them in civil matters, it would be well to do so also in spirituals.

There is not much to be done in convincing a Jew of the truths of the Catholic Church, provided he can be persuaded that the Messias has come. We all go together as far as the New Testament: their patriarchs are our patriarchs, their prophets our prophets, and their history our history. As we pointed out a short time ago, the constitution of the Jewish Church was the very same for its day as the Catholic is now. They had their Sanhedrim, with the high-priest, who spoke infallibly, and expounded the law of Moses, at its head; we have our assembly of bishops, with the Pope, who speaks infallibly, and expounds the law of Moses with the additions made by Jesus and His Apostles, at their head. constitution still exists, amplified and extended now; and if Jews could be brought to understand that the Messias has come, we should have no more differences. Our theologians and their Rabbis have argued for eighteen hundred years, and fought text by text and word by word the way which lies between us, with some gains to our side certainly, and with none to theirs. Still they live, for the most part, estimable members of society, fond, in America especially, of having their daughters educated under the care of Catholic nuns, and their sons brought up

in Catholic colleges. In a sketchy work like this we cannot give very long dissertations, nor is it our intention. We point out the way of truth in as brief a manner as possible. We feel on congenial ground at present, as we have done with those monsters who believe nothing but mud and the worms which crawl out of it. When we get to the supernatural we come nearer home.

Nearly two thousand years before our era, the patriarch Jacob, or Israel, gathered his sons about him in Egypt, and prophesied their future lot. When it came to the turn of Judah he spoke as follows: 'The sceptre shall not be taken away from Judah, nor a ruler from his thigh, till He come that is to be sent; and He shall be the expectation of the nations' (Gen. xlix. 10). That this prophecy referred to the Messias is plain, both in the text where the Hebrew שולה (Shilo) can refer to none other than the Messias, who was the Expected of the nations; and the fact that the sceptre שבש (shevet) has long ago passed, not only from the grasp of any member of the tribe of Judah, but from the Jewish race altogether. There are two observations regarding this prophecy which we would like to call attention to. The tribes were all scattered before the coming of our Lord, except the tribe of Judah, and this tribe was utterly scattered at the destruction of Jerusalem; so that if a Messias started to-morrow for the Jews, no one could tell what tribe He belonged to. Some Rabbis say that shevet does not mean a sceptre. but a rod of correction, and that the rod of correction is held over the house of Israel yet. This is a very ingenious solution, but a very flimsy one. First, because the rod of correction, even in the hand of a governor, is called in Hebrew a point (mechokek); and even if it happened to coincide with a sceptre when wielded by the hand of a bad king, as it has sometimes, it must have departed now, when the Jews have no king, either good or bad. Besides, the shevet was not used badly by David, Solomon, and others, but rather by Saul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin. The sceptre is gone; therefore the Messias has come, about two thousand years ago.

The next thing to which the attention of Jews has to be called is the famous prophecy of Daniel. The Angel Gabriel touched him at the time of the evening sacrifice, when he was engaged in prayer, and said, 'Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished, and everlasting justice may be brought, and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled, and the Saint of Saints may be anointed. Know thou therefore and take notice, that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times. sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny Him shall not be His. And a people with their leader that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary : and the end thereof shall be waste, and after the end of the war the appointed desolation. And He shall confirm the covenant with many in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation and to the end' (Daniel ix. 24-27).

There are various readings of the chronology of those ancient times, but the most reliable out of many is that the decree or edict for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the second temple being then finished, went forth A.M. 3550, or 454 years before the birth of Christ. Now the seventy weeks of Daniel, or 490 years, began to be fufilled. Sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, would bring us to the thirtieth year of our Lord, which synchronised with His baptism by John in the Jordan. He began His ministry then; and in three years and a half, or the middle of the next week of years, He was crucified on Mount Calvary.

Jesus is slain in the half of the last week, and the victims of the Jews ceased to be acceptable after His sacrifice. Mount Moriah itself was soon desolate, for the Jews ceased to be His; and Titus with his legions destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Titus tried to preserve the temple, but it was destroyed in spite of him. The abomination of desolation then took place; the prophecy of our Lord was fulfilled, when there was not a stone left upon a stone. The temple has continued so since, for the desolation is to continue to the end. Julian the Apostate tried to

build the temple in order to falsify the prophecy of our Lord, and even Gibbon has to admit that the destruction of his work was miraculous. The Jews have had no sacrifice ever since. Their worship now is as empty as that of the lowest Protestant conventicle; and the wise ones amongst them come to us and worship when the sacrifice foretold by Malachy is offered—a clean oblation, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof.

We will call attention to two more prophecies out of the many which bear upon the same subject, in order to see more clearly that the Messias has come. When those among the Jews who had returned from captivity, and had seen the former temple, began to despise Zorobabel's work, which was so far inferior to Solomon's, the prophet Aggeus, or Haggai, as he is sometimes called, said: 'Who is left among you that saw this house in its first glory? And how do you see it now? Is it not in comparison with that as nothing in your eyes? Yet now take courage, O Zorobabel, saith the Lord, and take courage, O Jesus the son of Josedec the highpriest, and take courage, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord of hosts; and perform (for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts) the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of the land of Egypt; and My Spirit shall be in the midst of you; fear not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet one little while, and I will move the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will move all nations; and the Desired of ALL NATIONS

SHALL COME: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts. Great shall be the glory of this house more than of the first, saith the Lord of hosts: in this place I will give peace, saith the Lord of hosts' (Agg. ii. 5-10).

The Shiloh came to that house, according to this prophet, and thus made it exceed the glory of the former. That house was destroyed in A.D. 70, and the peace given then by Jesus Christ has been enjoyed by His followers for well-nigh two thousand years.

The prophet Malachi gives another sentence which is worth recording. He says: 'Behold, I send My angel, and he shall prepare the way before My face. And presently the Lord whom you seek, and the angel of the testament whom you desire, shall come to His temple. Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord of hosts' (Mal. iii. 1).

Here we have a distinct prophecy about St. John the Baptist, and the fulfilment of all can be seen in the New Testament. It is clear, therefore, that the Messias has come during the existence of that second temple. It was there He was presented; there He taught; there He drove out the money-changers; and there the veil was rent in twain at His Crucifixion, which showed that the Jewish dispensation had passed into a higher and more perfect one.

We are fully aware that all these texts have been discussed and quarrelled over by Jews and Christians, word for word and point for point; that various names have been invented, and various explanations given of the difficulties on both sides; but it is fair to assert that the most learned of the Rabbis have concluded that either the Messias has come in figure, or that He is no longer to be expected in substance.

There are two nice questions which can be raised here, and which would deserve a more lengthened treatment than we can give them. Was the Messias promised to be God? And does Jesus Christ fulfil all the expectations which the prophets raised in the minds of the Jews?

The first is evident from Isaias: 'God Himself shall come and save us,' and 'Behold, I shall send My angel before Me, and he will prepare the way before My face.' These passages were quoted by Himself, and proved by His miracles; and, indeed, it was for the supposed blasphemy of insisting upon being acknowledged as God that He was put to death. In fact, unless He were both God and man, the Atonement would be imperfect. If He were merely God, He could not suffer; and if He were merely man, He could not satisfy, as the satisfactory action should be of infinite value to atone for an offence against an infinite Being.

That Jesus Christ did not fulfil the crude expectations of the Jews is certain. They thought He would come as a conqueror, and restore the temporal kingdom which they had lost. Seeing that He came to give a kingdom which was not of this world, they were not so ready to receive Him. His kingdom did

not look very flourishing at the time of His Crucifixion; but when one looks at His work there can be no doubt of His intention. He came to establish a kingdom which still exists, and extends itself over the whole earth, to which every tribe and tongue has submitted. This kingdom has been established in a most extraordinary and unlooked-for way. If it were an imposture it could not have lived for a century. The preachers of its doctrines were Jews, who knew our Lord intimately, and who did not believe in Him except in a grudging manner. Yet so firmly did they believe when the full knowledge was given them that they died for their faith. No one everdenied the genuineness of the Gospel narrative. The Apostles were too simple and straightforward to invent anything, and if they did, there were plenty of living witnesses to contradict them.

Any Jew who would admit that the Messias had come would at once admit that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messias; there has been no other historical figure in whom the prophecies have been fulfilled, and there can be none other, as we see very clearly.

The next step is an easy one. A Jew sees many jarring and contending sects which claim, each after its fashion, to be the oracles of Christ and the exponents of His teaching; but we think a Jew will have no difficulty in deciding which is the real successor of Him and His Apostles. We recollect hearing an anecdote of a parson in Ireland, who was conversing with a priest, and saw a Jew coming towards them.

\*Let us ask old Isaac a question,' said the minister.

'Better let him alone,' said the priest. However, he did ask the question, somewhat after this form: 'Here, now, are three of us representatives of various schools of belief, and each of us in earnest in his own peculiar tenets; which of us do you think is right or nearest the truth?' The Jew replied, 'If the Messias has not come, I am right; if the Messias has come, the priest is right. But whether He has come or not, you are wrong.'

The Jew sees clearly the same principle maintained in the Catholic Church which has been always considered essential in his own, namely, a written law in the custody of expounders who are gifted with the privilege of inerrancy in their pronouncements. He may object to this or that dogma, to this or that practice, and the answers to them are easily given and easily understood; but to the system he cannot and will not object. The minor difficulties will be alluded to further on; all we want in the beginning is to admit the principle.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### MAHOMETANS.

It would be difficult to find any historic character who has left such an indelible mark in the world, and has been so variously judged, as Mahomet. That a man who starts a new religion should be judged from two opposite points of view by his followers

and his opponents is natural enough. That to his own he should be all saint, and to those not his own all sinner, is to be expected. That some should attribute mean, and some noble, motives to a man's achievements when these wring admiration from an awestricken world is part of the history of the human Mahomet, however, is an exception almost to every way of handling a great man; for a great man undoubtedly he was, whether for good or for evil. His own do not consider him all saint, for the very reason that he made no pretensions to sanctity, and lauded as inimitable those who deserved to be considered as holy. Those who reject his doctrines, strange to say, do not consider him all sinner. great many of his contemporaries did; but the longer the time which elapsed from his death and the aggressive warfare of his followers, the more did the sense of justice move men to form a fair opinion of his life and doctrines. There are plenty of commentators, from Abulfeda down to Washington Irving, and of admirers from Abu Bekr to Mr. Carlyle; but they all leave him, and us who read them, in a state of doubt as to his real character.

One thing we may fairly assume as granted, though somewhat reluctantly by many writers, and that is, that Mahomet was in earnest when he began his work. His whole life is a clear proof of the fact. He was no hypocrite. He never pretended to virtues which he did not possess, nor did he deny the faults he was guilty of. His Koran is a plain evidence of the mind he had. We may quarrel with him for

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having the notions which he believed to be revelations; but we can scarcely—there is such an evidence of genuineness about his utterances-accuse him of saying what he did not think, or of imposing as a creed upon others what he did not believe himself. It is plain, from the language of the Koran, that he really did believe in everything he uttered, and that where we meet contradictions in various passages we must conclude that each sentence was an exposition of his then state of mind, and that during the course of his life he often changed his opinions. An impostor would be more careful, and would stick to a lie when it was proved he had said it. his doctrines and contrast them with the purity of the Gospel is not fair. It is better to consider what were the circumstances under which he began his mission, the materials he had to work upon, the design he formed, and the manner of its execution. In these we shall find something to admire, and a good many more things deserving of censure.

The first wonder we meet with in Mahometanism is the fact that a man who could neither read nor write was able to put together those beautiful verses, some of them really sublime, which form the Koran. The Arabic language is a most copious and musical one; and it was customary in Mahomet's younger days to have clubs, as we should call them now, in which young men exercised themselves in spontaneous oratory and in improvising verses. One need not be surprised at the proficiency which geniuses could make in this kind of exercise, when we

remember that some of the sweetest Irish songs were composed by illiterate poets, and when one hears of a milkmaid in the county Louth who used to spend her evenings in composing tunes, which were afterwards learnt by illiterate pipers, and now form many of the most pleasing airs which enliven a rustic party. Mahomet became an adept in this sort of early exercise, and his travels as an itinerant merchant added considerably to his knowledge of the world. He married, early in life, a rich widow, and his competence threw him upon his own resources of mind for occupation. He was a fine thinker, and a shrewd observer of things around him; had he been an educated man he would have shone brightly in any profession.

Arabia was in a strange state of semi-barbarism and incipient civilisation at the beginning of the seventh century. There seemed to be no religion thoroughly understood. The Judaism which was known then was mixed with the traditions of the Magi and the children of Ishmael. The Christianity which was first preached to the nomadic tribes was mixed up with apocryphal Gospels, rejected traditions, and the new heresies of the Gnostics and Eutycheans. Idolatry had not disappeared, except in a few places, and the Christian reverence for statuary of saintly beings became easily mixed up with old fables by an imaginative race, or rather conglomeration of races.

One thing struck Mahomet, and became the fundamental principle of his entire mission. He saw, as any thinking mind must see, that there was and could not be but one God. This is the first thing he starts from. All nature spoke it, and a child of nature felt it. If there was a God, as there must be, He must have a prophet to speak His knowledge to mankind. Mahomet saw no prophet who came up He knew Moses was a great prophet, to his idea. and Jesus Christ was a greater; but he saw only garbled specimens of their teaching-one too easy and the other too severe for his neighbours. then conceived that he was called himself, and, being given to trances, fancied he had received communications from the Angel Gabriel. This is how he began his mission.

He was determined to put down idolatry at any cost, and, at first, laid down as a principle: 'Whoever believe in God and the last day, and do what is right, shall have their reward with the Lord' (Koran, chap. ii.). This was what we might call the doctrine of the Universalists at present, and was the first notion of Mahomet. Afterwards, when he became powerful by a great number of followers, and when his sword had cut down nations to be his tributaries, he made stricter laws, and insisted upon all embracing Mahometanism or paying tribute.

His other doctrines became developed according to the exigencies of his followers or the nature of the circumstances in which he found himself. They are so well known that it is not necessary to make a summary of them; we will only allude to one or two peculiarities.

The first is his lowering of women, and the freedom he gives men with regard to the marriage-bond. Now when we see Mahomet devote chapter iii., Imran, to the birth and youth of the Blessed Virgin, and another, the nineteenth, Mary, to the Incarnation, and when we see that he allows her all the attributes which the most devout Catholic ever considered her entitled to, we are surprised at how far he is above modern heretics and infidels.

The Immaculate Conception is laid down as a doctrine in the third chapter of the Koran, and the conception of Jesus Christ, without the intervention of man, in the nineteenth. Mahomet's description of these matters is, of course, rather broad, as was the style of his age; but there is not the slightest sin imputed to Mary or her Son in the whole of his revelations, as far as we have read them. We date the elevation of the female sex from the devotion of the Catholic Church to Mary; and it is strange to find that Mahomet lowered the sex, whilst believing Mary an exception. It is not true to say that Mahomet denies them souls. He does not, for he says clearly that they shall be accountable for their deeds. In his description of heaven he assigns them rather an inferior place.

It may interest some to know that Mahomet was the first teetotaler, and that total abstinence was one of his strongest points in the negative line. He was the first who taught that religion was to be propagated by the sword. The promises for this world and for the next which were held out to those who died in fighting for Islam had a great deal to do with the rapid spread of Mahomet's teaching among the luxurious Asiatics. There was something repugnant to the better instincts of Europeans in a life of sensuality here and a sensual heaven Men might be sensual, but it never came hereafter. into their heads that sensuality was a virtue. As long as the spirit of war was fresh, and the brave followers of the Crescent kept themselves inured to a martial life, Mahometanism flourished and made way; but as soon as they rested from contending against Christianity, and fell back into the pleasant beds prepared for them by the Koran, decay immediately set in. There was one virtue which Mahomet extolled, and that was hospitality. The Crusaders give us splendid accounts of the hospitality of the first Moslems, and carried home to Europe many fine practices to adorn their chivalry from the East; and Christian children are to be found yet who admire the generosity of Harûn al Raschîd, the Khalif of Bagdad.

At the present moment Islam seems to be dying. Its prowess is gone, and its professors are enervated. War brings out some noble warriors, worthy of Soliman, but they are the exceptions.

We would point out one contrast between Catholicity and every other form of newer or older revelations so called. Catholicity holds up not only to admiration, but to imitation, the spotless purity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of her Divine Son. She will have only the pure and chaste for her

Apostles, for her priests, for her consecrated handmaidens in the work of spreading her faith and power in the world.

Every new form of belief outside the Catholic either begins with legalised impurity or drifts into it. Mahomet gave a loose rein in this way by legalising limited polygamy and divorce. Luther began his Reformation by breaking his vows and espousing a fallen nun. Henry VIII. broke away from obedience to the Pope because he wanted to divorce his lawful wife and marry a paramour. Swedenborg, who had revelations far more extraordinary than even Mahomet, assigns a place of punishment to those who are chaste in the next world, and a stigma to them in this; whilst he legalises concubinage amongst his own followers; and Joe Smith and Brigham Young, the newest prophets with whom we are acquainted, allow polygamy of a more extensive nature than that mentioned in the Koran.

It is humiliating to human nature, even in an unregenerate state, to see men who pretend to be the mouthpieces of God coolly laying down sensuality as a means of virture. Reasoning stops here. We heard of a heretic who contended for a long time in argument with St. Francis of Sales. When the holy bishop had the best of it, and left his opponent no refuge, he (the heretic) rang a bell, and summoned to their presence a beautiful woman. 'Solve that argument,' said he triumphantly; and the Bishop of Geneva retired. Until we devise some mode of solving such solid and attractive arguments it will

be very hard to find a way for grace into the Moslem heart. Let them, even when they have lost themselves in human pleasures, but see something divine in a purer and better life, and the steps upwards are not difficult to ascend. There is enough of wisdom in the Koran itself to guide them through a portion of the way, and the harmony and beauty of the Gospel, as taught and practised by the Catholic Church, will do the rest.

The Mahometans have very reverent minds. They are exact in their prayers and pilgrimages and their various ablutions; they have but to see that Catholicity will raise them higher, both in their own estimation and in that of others, and it will be something. Above all, let them learn to be disgusted with wives here and houris hereafter, and there is some hope. Until then we see very little. We only know from themselves that they despise Protestants because the latter grudge the Blessed Virgin her privileges.

# CHAPTER XXVII.

### UNITARIANS.

THE most ancient of heresies is doubtless that which denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of St. John has evidently been written in order that no doubt might be left on the minds of the faithful about the belief of the Apostles in this

essential dogma. The opponents of the Gospel admit this; even M. Renan himself admits that the Apostles believed in our Lord's divinity. He does not think this much to their credit, of course; and had they been deeply imbued with modern French philosophy, they might not be so fit for the grace of faith. soever this may be, the heresy did not make much headway until the fourth century, when Arius, a priest of Alexandria, put forth the theory that Christ was a creature formed by God from nothing like any other. He found himself pushed to this theory by his difficulty in believing the Trinity, and understanding the contact of the Creator with the creature. Jesus he admitted to be the first and most perfect of creatures, and like unto God. The heresy. after spreading pretty widely, was condemned in the Council of Nicea in 325. A new form of it sprang up, allowing Jesus to come nearer to God, and the disputes about the ομοουσιον and the ομοιουσιον agitated the Church for centuries; and what with the deceptions and subterfuges of the Semiarians, a sort of sanction was received by an invalid Council for a heterodox term, when totus mundus ingemuit se videre Arianum. This mistake was soon detected; but Arianism spread very fast for a few centuries, when nearly half the Church was tainted with it. It was extinguished about the sixth century, just before the rise of Mahometanism. St. Athanasius in Egypt, St. Hilary in Gaul, St. Ambrose in Milan, St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen in the East, all distinguished themselves in crushing this heresy. It was dead then for several years, until the principles of the Reformation brought in the right of private judgment. Servetus started it in Switzerland, and Carrin had him burnt at the stake. The two Socinus then took it up in Poland; and thence it came through Germany into England, and it has its chief strong. hold at present in the North of Ireland. It was after Socinus had developed and taught its theory that it received the name it has, its professors calling themselves Unitarians, as contradistinguished from Trinitarians.

There have been various phases and subdivisions amongst the holders of this doctrine, some allowing our Lord to have existed before the Incarnation, some not; some allowing that He had received a share of the Divinity, some none; some that He had been taken up to a participation of it through His merits, and some deriving all His merits from His having been animated by some emanation of the Divinity. He is God, or He is not. A partial God is a contradiction, and two Gods is another. There can be but one God, and He must be eternal. The Three Persons of the Trinity are but One God.

There was an allusion made in a previous chapter to the prophecies pointing out that the Redeemer was to be God Himself, and that none other could give sufficient atonement for sin. St. John, in the beginning of his Gospel, says, 'In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' (John i. 1). According to these words, slightly paraphrased, He was in the begin-

ning, or before time began, eternity. He was a distinct Person from the Father: having been with God, we have His Divinity. He was God, we have His creative power: 'all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made that was made.' If He were not very God, how could these things be asserted of Him-He, the Only-begotten? Our Lord Himself says: 'I and the Father are One.' 'Before Abraham was I AM.' St. Paul calls Him, in Romans viii. 32, God; elsewhere, 'the Lord of glory,' 'the great God,' 'God the Saviour.' In fact the whole range of the New Testament gives us a number of epithets regarding our Lord which can be predicated only of God. The works which He performed to prove His Divinity, and His assertion of it, move us the same way. Who but God could still the storm, remove diseases at will, make men walk upon the water, raise the dead to life, and raise Himself as well? The Gospel narrative was never denied even by the Jews. They may have endeavoured to explain it away; but deny it they never did.

The only objections worth noticing are those which are brought from His own words, 'The Father is greater than I,' and some others of the same tendency; but that He spoke here as man, and that many of His actions were purely human, no sensible person can deny. Any amount of humble assertions about His humanity, and the actions, though Godlike, which had to be undergone in consequence, cannot interfere with the identity of being so clearly and distinctly marked out in the Scriptures between the

Three Persons, when all nations are to be baptised in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The unvarying doctrine of the Church, as expressed in her Councils, in the teachings of her doctors, in the death of her martyrs, in the living voice with which men are taught now, insists upon a belief in the Trinity, and therefore in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, as being necessary to salvation.

The difficulties raised by unbelievers have been answered over and over again, in every age of the Church; and great wars, both of words and arms, have been fought, not only over every word which can be quoted on one side and the other, but even over a single vowel. To examine, therefore, fundamentally a question which has claimed the attention of our greatest writers for eighteen hundred years would be a very tedious process, and one not contemplated in a sketchy work of this kind. It is rather our intention to throw out hints about the management of arguments, than to give the arguments themselves. With men who cavil at mysteries in divine things, because they cannot understand them, it is useless to reason; and with people who receive some mysteries, and reject others which the Church teaches, there is only one way of proceeding. Which is the more consistent system—that which receives all the Catholic Church does, and harmonises them beautifully into one consistent whole; or that which maims the edifice of the Christian faith by rejecting one of its most integral parts? That a belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ has been a cardinal

article of the Christian faith, and the only one which ever moved the nations to an acceptance of the pure revelation of God, is clearly seen by the most cursory glance at history: not only belief in the Divinity of Christ, but in His power as God to institute the Sacraments by which grace is brought to us, and to organise a system of Church government with which He has promised to dwell for ever. We see this Church, which He told to teach all nations to observe whatsoever He commanded them in the deposit of faith, still as young and flourishing as she was the first day; always growing and adding to her fold, notwithstanding trials and oppositions from within and from without. In fact it is the real dwelling of Christ upon earth in the Blessed Sacrament, the guidance of the Holy Ghost which He promised, that preserves the Church, and makes her always young and vigorous.

If we are not to throw away the benefits of redemption altogether, by starting from a principle which destroys supernatural truth, namely the committal to every one of the right to judge for himself, we must admit that God ordained a hierarchy to which He gave the keeping of His truth. This He did when He said, 'As My Father sent Me I send you,' with which words He prefaced His saying, 'All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth.' Here He spoke as the Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, as the Pope or visible Head of the Church. In this Church no one was to minister, unless he was called by Him and sent by His Vicar,

or those commissioned by him. Others might talk and expound on their own responsibility, but only those could speak as persons having authority. This truth was always held as an axiom amongst the early heretics. No matter how free they might make individually with matters of faith, they never felt called upon to believe any unless they were proposed to them by their pastors assembled in some sort of Council. Individual teachings were not considered orthodox, even by their partisans, unless their bishops approved of them in Council.

Hence we see the early professors of Arianism, or the first Unitarians, holding pseudo-Councils, and getting articles of faith declared by bishops and priests in them. The first Arians had a regular hierarchy, had valid ordinations, and a semblance of authority, very like the Catholic Church. died away in the sixth century; and when the same speculations reappeared in the sixteenth, their first followers did without the encumbrance of a hierarchy. We suppose the Unitarians have some system of ordination, or setting men apart for the work of the ministry, analogous to that of the Presbyterians; but we know for certain that they have no bishops, no hierarchy, and no orders. They have the doctrines of the Arians without their discipline; and we suspect that a great many of the tenets of Arius himself would sound very like Popery now, if uttered from a Unitarian pulpit.

What measure of spiritual perfection they admit in Jesus Christ it is difficult to say: whether they suppose Him to be the first of creatures, or to have attained to a special height of grace and a quasi-God-like holiness, we know not; but one thing is certain—that they reject the doctrine of the Trinity, and that if they approach Sabellianism, they come no nearer thereby to Catholicity.

It is worthy of notice that a denial of our Lord's Divinity seems the most natural of all heresies. Jews said, 'Is not this the son of Joseph and Mary, whom we all know?' and they treated Him as a man, a wonderful man to be sure, for they saw that He was man, but they did not see any further. we say that this is a most natural heresy. Why is it that it never took a strong hold upon mankind? That a mere man did all He did would seem to redound to our dignity as men, and make us more pleased with ourselves and our capabilities; and yet such a view does not seem to have been appreciated by the great thinkers and hairsplitters of former days. The Arians and Unitarians have one thing in their favour which none of the theorists, like the Latter-day Saints, can be charged with. They did not give the rein to impurity; and they certainly cannot be charged in their tenets with advocating breaches of the Ten Commandments. far they are a respectable sect of Christianity, if we may apply the term to them without offending them, and deserve not the reproach which other deniers of the Divinity of our Lord have so justly and confessedly earned. And we say again, Why is it that so respectable a sect has not prospered? Had they not certain elements of credence which would attract the more critical and hard-thinking portion of mankind to them? They have not prospered, as the present condition of their members shows. They revived in the time of the Reformation. They have not an episcopacy or a hierarchy. They have some respectable churches, and some learned divines of the Rationalistic school amongst them; but here they stop.

The fact which alone can explain the mystery is, that they are too natural, too respectable, too rational, and too secular. When the Godhead of Jesus Christ is not admitted, and when the wonders of His life are lowered to the level of respectabilities, all the supernatural disappears, and what remains, though excellent in its way, is not enough for the higher cravings of the human heart. It is as if we cut all the miracles of our Lord in two. We are moved to tenderness over His shedding of tears at the death of Lazarus, His affection for the two sisters, and His restoring to life their departed brother; but we leave aside the divine power which said, 'Lazarus, come forth!' and it was done. admire His kindness and tenderness for the widow of Naim, and the raising of her only son from the bier; but we close our eyes to the power which could second His inclinations. Miracles, when divided even, are beautiful; but is not the end of a miracle the very reason for which it is done, and is not this the very thing a Unitarian ignores?

In dealing with a Unitarian as a convert, one has

generally the very best specimen of a Protestant. It is only necessary to bring him to a knowledge of the Trinity, and everything else follows. We must say that converts from Unitarianism are generally found to be very fervent, and free from sentimentalism, but slightly given to self-opinion in matters where such a propensity can be exercised without blame.

# CHAPTER XXVIII.

# QUAKERS.

THE state of religious parties in England in and about the time of Elizabeth filled the minds of a great many with doubts and fears. The days of Henry and his son were past, and Mary was in her grave. All things were to be changed under Elizabeth, and she began her work with the mind of a Tudor and the determination of a virago. seemed to know how he was to worship. external mode of knowing God was perpetually changing, and no body of people had a true ritualistic spirit in those days; so that a few resolved to leave all externals aside, worship God in their hearts, and live peaceably and honestly in the world. was really the origin of that powerful and influential body of men called Quakers—a name which they do not deserve, for they were, and are, the most courageous and steadfast upholders of their opinions in modern times. They call themselves the 'Society of Friends; and indeed they bear out in practice what they profess. They are very honest, very sober, very truthful, and very charitable amongst themselves; and outsiders cannot complain of any material violation of their professed principles in their practice. They were persecuted, imprisoned, fined, and at last transported themselves, under the direction of William Penn, and settled in the present State of Pennsylvania in America.

Their habits are rather peculiar. They discountenance luxury in dress. They are frugal and modest in their lives and language; and they consider it sinful to take an oath. They help their own poor, and look carefully after their interests in this world. They have given the country great merchants, great orators, and great statesmen; and although they condemn war, they can fight well on the defensive They tolerate all kinds of reliwhen necessary. gions, and persecute none. They are a most peaceful body of people. They consider it against the Gospel to admit of grades in society, and eschew titles. They object to salutations and external ceremonies, of civil as well as of religious politeness; yet they are neither uncivil nor irreligious. They have latterly modified some of their external peculiarities, such as their 'thees' and 'thous,' and their fantastic garbs. The more elderly Quaker women still wear ancient bonnets, and the more ancient men broadbrimmed hats. The patriarchal portion of their Society wear plain and inexpensive garments of a modest hue and antiquated fashion; but the juniors speak, act, and dress like the members of the grade in which they move. Very few of them are poor; and they are all respected, even in their eccentricities, by those who know them. They have sometimes formed subjects of laughter for libertines; but this is very much to their credit. They have always been admired by well-meaning people; and it is our opinion that they deserve imitation in their social habits, and in the peaceful tendency of their public spirit.

To find out their theological character (the only aspect of their lives with which we are at present concerned) is not an easy matter. A writer not at all hostile to them has said that they are more uniform in the cut of their garments than in the doctrines they profess. This may be intended for a smart observation, but it does not thereby happen to be the less true.

They accept the Old and New Testaments as a divine revelation. They believe in the Trinity, although in Penn's exposition of their doctrines they seem to verge towards Sabellianism. However, this is not so clear, and we give them credit for being a step nearer to Christianity than the Unitarians. It is certain that they believe in the Holy Ghost; and they could not very well get that far without some sort of a belief in the Second Person. There are strange vagaries recorded of them on these points, and many others of a kindred nature—such as the feminine nature of some divine perfections, and the masculine nature of others—but these we believe to

be not incorporated in their system, and to belong rather to the Shakers, or some minor sect of them, than the fine charitable body which owns Fox for its founder, and Penn and Barclay for its first apostles. But the fact is, that it is not fair to raise questions about their dogmatic belief in the Trinity. They believe in One God, and they have a shadowy notion of the Three Persons; and that is as much as we can expect from people who eschew dogma, and make everything of observance.

There is, unfortunately, an old heresy at the root of their profession, namely, Pelagianism.\* It is strange that there are scarcely any new heresies, and that all the modern ones are only ancient ones dug up, after being buried for centuries. That unaided human nature was sufficient for all the duties of social life was the doctrine of the Pelagians; and it has the merit of being condemned over and over again, as well as written against, by St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and the greatest lights of the Church in their day. It died out under the strokes of such giant intellects, and revived unexpectedly under the reign of private judgment in England. clear enough, even to untutored intellects, that unaided reason cannot give certain data in matters of earthly concern, much less can it give them in matters that exceed the bounds of reason.

<sup>\*</sup> Pelagius was a Welshman. His name was Morgan or Murphy. Both names signify a seaman. The Greek word πελαγιος has the same signification. This heresy gave great trouble once in England.

practice of virtue St. Paul tells us that we are not able to think a good thought as of ourselves: a fortiori, we are not able to speak a good word or do a good To say that people think, act, and do good, and at the same time do not believe in grace, is no more than to say that God has breathed the breath of life into certain handfuls of clay; and that these handfuls are stupid enough to think that an ape with a worn-out tail did it instead, or that it never has been done at all. To account for the absurd conclusions which people draw from wrong premisses would be an endless task. When the de facto argument is brought before us that Quakers are an upright, honest, and truthful race, and do not believe in the grace of God, we respond that nevertheless God gives them grace, but they have not the grace to thank Him for doing so. Blessings are given for material pagan virtues in this world, because they cannot be rewarded in the next.

It is almost unnecessary to pursue the subject of their doctrines any further, for, indeed, their great leading principles are to avoid dogmatising and all external distinctions in religious matters. They reject Sacraments of every kind, and consequently have no ministers. They have meeting-houses where they all assemble in silence; and if anybody chooses to follow an impulse to speak, he or she is at liberty to do so. When we think of the time that gave birth to this peculiar form of Christianity, we are not so much surprised. The spirit of Protestantism gave latitude in external matters, but only theore-

tically. Persecutions were instituted by those who maintained, 'Orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy your doxy.' To put away all manner of 'doxies' because they conflicted one with another was like putting away all food or all clothing because tastes differed as to the quality of the former and style of the latter. It solved the Gordian knot for the time, but made very poor provision for the instincts of human nature, and for the reasonable wishes of human beings.

Man is composed of body and soul, and the soul acts through the body; yet Catholic mystics have considered that pure contemplation of the divine perfections, and the union of the soul with God in prayer, are far above external devotion of any kind, except perchance those which are sacramental. It is carrying out the words of our Lord when He defended Mary's contemplation from the complaints of Martha's offended housewifery: 'Mary has chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her.' Catholic theologians all teach that the exteriors of religious worship, even in Sacraments, can be gone through, although those who perform them are enemies of God at the time. They call such sins by the name of sacrilege; but they would not advocate the abolition of Sacraments because a few abuse them. On the contrary, their doctrine is, give freely where you can: Sacramenta propter homines, non homines propter Sacramenta (Sacraments were instituted for men, and not men for Sacraments). We insist upon an interior preparation and purification of the soul for the reception of the Sacraments, and teach that it is better for a man not to receive them at all than to receive them unworthily. Taking this interior preparation by itself, and condemning the exterior act as redundant, is the foundation of the errors of the Quakers. The only vital part in any system of worship outside the Catholic Church is what they have taken from it—the alphasic or heresy is the portion stolen. It is very hard for Quakers to have subdivisions or sects amongst them, because there is nothing to subdivide.

The question between them and the Catholic Church is the one of the sacramental system and external worship. The sacramental system is an outward sign instituted by our Lord, at the placing of which divine grace will come into the soul. have already laid down the necessity of grace for the spiritual life, or the keeping of God's commandments -what now concerns us is, whether there ought to be and are exterior signs to show when it is conferred. In all ages there have been external marks whereby God's people could be distinguished, and even the first Quakers had a particular kind of dress to distinguish them from others. It is certain that our senses and bodily faculties are the instruments of our sins, and that purely mental sins are very rare. Now the question is, ought not we to do something for heaven, as well as for the devil, with our senses and bodily faculties? No one will deny that who examines our nature. Should there not be, by analogy, something sensible, whereby it would become known

that our faculties were hallowed? Decidedly. Well, this is nothing but the theory of a Sacrament. Has Jesus Christ actually ordained certain signs of grace? He has appointed that we should be bap-He has. tised with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He was even baptised Himself; and He has said that, unless a man be thus born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. He sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire, and ordained that they should confer this blessing upon future Christians by the imposition of hands. Here we have two of the Sacraments-Baptism and Confirmation. He instituted a great Sacrament under the forms of bread and wine, in which He is Himself really present, gave His Apostles power to do the same, and immolate Him mystically through themselves and their successors, to whom they were to transmit this power to the end of time. Here we have the Eucharist and Holy Orders, two more Sacraments. He gave power to His Apostles and to their successors to forgive sins, after first distinguishing between those which were to be forgiven and those which were to be retained; and this was to continue, unless we suppose that the power would be taken away when it was most needed. The sentence thus pronounced He assured us would be ratified in Now how could a priest distinguish between sins if he did not hear them? and how could he hear them if they were not confessed to him? Our Lord said again of marriage: 'Those whom God

hath joined together let man not put asunder.' Here are two more Sacraments—Penance and Matrimony. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction must have been instituted by Him, since He alone could grant an ordinance by which sin could be remitted; but it was clearly published by St. James. Here, then, are seven Sacraments or means of grace actually instituted by our Lord; and to put them all aside as useless seems a very daring act for one who pretends to be a Christian.

There are other external ceremonies, apart from or connected with these Sacraments, following another analogy of nature. Inasmuch as it would be indecent for people to go naked, putting aside the danger of colds and death, so would it be unseemly to have those sacred rites administered in a bald naked manner, without clothing them in those external ceremonies which would impress their beauty and power upon the soul through the senses. This is the fundamental reason for the externals of worship. It may be added also that in all civilised, and for that matter in uncivilised, society there are external forms, established by custom, to show courtesy and respect to those to whom it is due. To put away all these bowings, touchings of the hat, shaking of hands, and so forth, would be to go back to a state preceding barbarism itself. These things, we admit, are not under all circumstances of essential importance, and may be partially dispensed with in certain cases; but they remain nevertheless as tokens of Christian politeness. We ought to worship God with our bodies as well as our souls. Our voices should be lifted in His praise, our ears should hearken to His counsels, our eyes should look upon scenes which would waft our thoughts upwards, and the smell of incense has always been typical of the agreeableness of our prayers. As was remarked before, it is not fair to give our senses altogether to earthly things, and degrade them from the higher ends for which they were given us.

The good sense which has always been characteristic of the Quaker body has led several of them to recognise the importance and necessity of Sacraments and external worship, and some of the brightest ornaments of our Church have come to us from their ranks. We can only say to those who remain, 'Go thou and do likewise.'

## CHAPTER XXIX.

#### CALVINISTS.

THE systems of errors hitherto noticed have existed in one or other form from the beginning of the Church until now. They may have put on new phases to suit new states of society, and adopted forms of technical speech to be the better understood; but they are all old errors in modern dresses.

The great revolt against the Church in the sixteenth century marks a peculiar epoch in the history of Christianity. The errors then broached, almost simultaneously, in Germany, in Switzerland, and in England have continued to our day, not as frag-

mentary sects, hid in mountain fastnesses, or in small bodies struggling against stern churchmen and statesmen, but in powerful bodies and large communities. The Reformation is the term applied to this great change in the ecclesiastical condition of Europe. The Reformation began in Germany, by the protesting of an Augustinian friar against the preaching of certain indulgences granted by the Holy See. It was at first like one of those groans elicited from honest men against what they conceive to be abuses, which sounded a while, and was echoed here and there, but which at length was stifled by the high hand of authority. Such were the protests of Wicklyffe, John Huss, Savonarola, and others. Just before the time of the Reformation a great many abuses had found their way into the Church. without vocations entered the priesthood in many places, because of the temporal position which ecclesiastical benefices gave them. Abbacies were held in commendam by the bastard sons of nobles; and the monks, living nominally under their rule, could indulge their froward nature without correction. Priests were promoted to dignities, not on account of their personal merit as churchmen, but rather because of their acceptance with princes and potentates. The highest positions in the Church became sometimes the prizes of obsequious courtiers, and men placed in posts of honour by foul means did not always kick away the ladders by which they climbed. doctrines of the Church of course remained always the same; but there may have been abuses in the

way her discipline and other practices were carried out; and the wonder is that there were not greater, seeing the hands into which such treasures had fallen for distribution. A Church can never be freed from stains by outside remedies or by schisms. She must begin her reformation from herself; and she has always the power and will to do so, if she be not thwarted by secular interests. Another thing worth remembering is that reformers, even among the children of the Church, seldom stop at the point where their services are required. They gain esteem by having the boldness to cry down what people instinctively know to be wrong; but in a short time vanity and self-satisfaction drive them farther than they intended to go. Once they pass the boundaries between the lawful and the unlawful, their career seems, like a train let loose down an incline, to gain velocity as it proceeds, and to be brought to a standstill only by a catastrophe. The Church did require to be purged of several defects at the time of the Reformation. She did at all times, and does now; for even when she was no wider than the twelve Apostles one of them was a black sheep. Church is composed of men, not of angels; and the similes of our Lord, in many places of the Gospel, clearly point out this fact. In her defined doctrines she never failed. She never defined anything which she thought proper to retract in the course of nearly two thousand years; but her doctrines were not always faithfully adhered to, and her untiring efforts have always been to make her members live up to

what they professed. The Apostle St. Paul complains that some of the first Christians did not come sober to Communion; and this may be one of the reasons why the faithful were obliged to receive in the morning, and fasting.

If the Reformers had confined themselves to preaching a more perfect observance of the Church's ordinances, and had set the example themselves, they would be, in all likelihood, now canonised Saints. SS. Ignatius, Xavier, and others were contemporaries of Luther and Melanchthon. They aspired to the highest observance of the Church's teaching, and led others up to the same point of perfection. Luther and his companions went downwards, and brought thousands after them.

The rapid spread of the doctrines of the Reformation amongst the northern countries of Europe cannot be altogether ascribed to the desire of greater purity of morals or greater simplicity of belief, when we see that impurity was the motive of making many adhere to them, and confusion and contradiction the webs which bound them together in a universal protestantism or negation. We do not intend to be unfair in judging of the motives of any or all reformers, nor to refuse them due praise where they merit it; but we cannot close our eyes to the facts of history. That the Reformers began by trying to remove the abuses which they saw around them may be easily supposed; but that they succeeded only in bringing in far worse abuses in their place must be candidly admitted. A little excess of temper and indignation in a bold reforming mind and an intemperance of language are but minor evils; but the abomination of desolation in the churches where Teutonic piety made room for its new devotions is something that must be looked at with other eyes than those of indulgence or admiration.

John Calvin seems to us the great genius of the Reformation. Luther found out every crack and hole he could in the armour of the Church, and drove his lance in a rude rough fashion right through. Calvin systematised his attacks with the skill and adroitness of a practised warrior, and set up something in place of every phantom he knocked down. The spirit of the Frenchman still lives, whilst that of the German has been exorcised out of all the bodies of which it once took possession. A brief summary of Calvin's theories will give us all that is positive in the present various kinds of Protestantism.

The following is a summary of his Institutions:

Book first. He admits the existence of God and the Trinity, because this doctrine is contained in the Old and New Testaments; and we are to judge of the canonical books and their meaning by some sort of innate spirit which he does not exactly define. The Scripture is the sole rule of faith, and the veneration of images is idolatry. We depend upon God in the moral as we do in the physical order, and all our actions are preordained by Him.

Book second. Original sin destroyed all the good there was in man by creation. Man is thoroughly corrupt and bad, and he cannot help being vicious.

He then treats of the Incarnation, and is pretty orthodox in his exposition of the doctrine, except where he says that its benefits or merits are imputed to us by faith.

Book third. His theory of justification is faith in Jesus Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, whereby we conceive a certain consciousness of the goodness of God in our regard, founded on the infallible promises of Jesus Christ. He defines penance to be a change of heart, and rejects contrition, confession, and satisfaction in a Catholic sense as so many abominations. Liberty is freedom from the old law, and leave to use indifferent things at pleasure in the new. Fasts and abstinence, therefore, curtail this liberty, and are abominations. Invocation of Saints detracts from the worship of God, and is impiety. All men are not justified, because God only chooses a few, and leaves all the rest to destruction. were created to be damned, just as a few were created to be saved.

His fourth book regards the exterior means which God uses to make us enter, and preserve us in, the society of Jesus Christ. He entitles these a legitimate ministry, the administration of the Sacraments, and the preaching of the pure word. These he explains after a fashion which denounces episcopacy, calls the Mass idolatry, and sweeps away everything ornamental from the church's buildings.

We shall only touch upon two points of his great theory here, as the other points will be found treated of under other headings. Before touching upon

these it might be well to say something of his character. He was of a severe gloomy disposition, and all his teachings, as well as his practice in Geneva, bear the impress of his genius. He, like Mahomet, married a widow in the beginning of his apostolate; but, unlike the Eastern Prophet, who added several other wives to the first, he was content with one wife, and did not marry again after she died. Perhaps he had enough of that state, when we know that she had a most violent temper. Disappointments in life have a great deal to do with souring dispositions, and giving a tincture of pessimism to everything contemplated. There was a great deal of this in Calvin.

The first theory of Calvin is his notions about Predestination. The terrible doctrine he lays down upon this point is often misunderstood. It is popularly believed to be somewhat like the following sketch of Burns's:

> 'O Thou, wha in the heavens dost dwell, Wha, as it pleases best Thysel', Sends ane to heaven and ten to hell, A' for Thy glory,

And no for any good or ill

They've done afore Thee!

I bless and praise Thy matchless might, When thousands Thou hast left in night, That I am here, afore Thy sight, For gifts and grace, A burnin' and a shinin' light To a' this place.'

The Calvinist is supposed to pray thus, in consc-

quence of his faith; and though it sounds like blasphemy it is the faith of thousands who think themselves infallibly holy.

Calvin himself would scarcely consider his doctrine fairly represented by his most 'burning and shining lights' in the present ministry. In truth we have to go further back to find out the nature of his cardinal doctrine. He establishes, with all sound theologians, the truth of God's prescience. certain that He foresees all our actions, good and evil. Through what medium does He foresee them? Is it through His own decreeing of them and physical premotion to them, or through a middle knowledge (scientia media) which is a foresight of the exercise man will make of his freedom? Theologians have expended reams of paper in trying to unravel this knot, and have generally left it as obscure as they found it. The doctrine of Catholics is that whatever way, unknown to us, God may foresee a free action. His knowledge never makes it a necessity. Eternity is a point coextensive with time, as the centre of a circle is to the circumference. A pen may move round the circumference, and the centre unmoved is always present to every point it reaches; in such manner is God present to all things past, present, and future. Several other similes and explanations are offered, but Catholics lay down two things as of faith: that God foresees all things, and that He cannot be deceived; that man is perfectly free, and can place or avoid placing a free action at his pleasure. Calvin chose to assert the first; and because he could

not see how to reconcile it with the second, he denied the existence of the second altogether. He had no alternative then, if he wished to be consistent, except to lay down the frightful doctrine of positive reprobation, which would amount to saying that if a man was born to be damned he could not possibly be saved, no matter how much he desired it or wished for it. God wishes all to be saved—'As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live;' and if some are lost it is altogether their own fault, and they are only lost after having refused graces and thrown them away in contempt. The how of this is one thing, the fact of it is another. We cannot explain all hows.

There is a very good monastic legend bearing on the subject. The devil once tempted an illiterate monk by proposing the difficulty of Predestination thus: 'If God foresees that you will be saved, you must be, no matter what you do, therefore enjoy this world; and if He foresees that you will be damned, down you must go, therefore enjoy yourself, for your penances will not avail you.' The monk answered, 'If God foresees that I shall be saved, what is the use of your losing your time in tempting me, because you won't have me at last? And if God foresees that I am to be damned, you may go and smoke your pipe, for I'll come down to you without any trouble.'

The next matter that calls for observation is the theory that the Bible alone is sufficient to decide all matters of controversy, and that Popes and Councils who pretended to be infallible in their decisions were

guilty of monstrous arrogance. No one of common sense could think of making a book, no matter how perfect it is, the standard of faith. A book is only so many words and sentences strung together. One takes one meaning, another another, out of the very same text. Who is to decide between them? text itself or other portions of the same book? same question recurs again, and so on ad infinitum. From the very nature of the case, if our Lord established a Church He should establish a principle of inerrancy or a last court of appeal in it as to the sense of the Scriptures. That is but common sense. Has He done so? The Church has always maintained that He has; and, if need be, quotes His own words to that effect. There is no circulus vitiosus here, for the quotations from Scripture are only illustrative of a great fact. The fact would remain if there never was a single word of the Scripture written. The written word is useful to the Church, but not necessary; it is the reverse of a blessing when people wrest it to their own destruction. Calvin and his school make the Bible to be something like he Koran-a sacred thing which seems to have life and to talk through other people's mouths, who fancy hey have imbibed a spirit. Did they take their idea rom the Mahometans?

Two things a Calvinist must get rid of before he sofit for instruction: justification by faith, and the sufficiency of the Bible for salvation. As long as these two ideas remain in his head, he never can make one step towards the Church.

We may remark that Calvin assumed infallibility himself when he condemned Servetus and others; but it was a common thing with the Reformers to arrogate to themselves what they denied to the Pope.

## CHAPTER XXX.

#### UNIVERSALISTS.

IT could not excite surprise if the enunciation of the dogmas of Calvin would drive away from his communion people who could not settle into the grim satisfaction of being themselves the elect. To pronounce the whole human race as outside the pale of salvation, save the few who held the tenets of a new-fangled reformer, was bad enough; but to say that God had so decreed it was a little too much. When, therefore, in 1619, in the synod held by the Calvinists in Dordrecht in Holland, the opinion was solemnly adopted that 'God, by an eternal and irrevocable decree, had predestined certain men to eternal salvation, and had consigned the rest to damnation, without having regard to the future merits or demerits, and that consequently He gives to the predestined irresistible graces by which they will necessarily arrive at eternal happiness, and that He refuses His graces to the reprobate, who will assuredly be damned for lack of this assistance,' a great falling off took place among the followers of Calvin. These sectaries, as they were called, are sometimes

styled Arminians, and sometimes, after a few subdivisions, became known under other names. went to the other extreme. They first held that all received grace enough to save every one on earth. This broad assertion was afterwards qualified and altered. Adherents came to their ranks from other branches of the various rising heresies, and fell away again. We lose sight of them as a distinct sect, holding themselves aloof from others, and only find traces of their modes of thought in some of the writers of the eighteenth century. At present there is a large body of Christians, chiefly in America, who believe that all will be saved who follow their own natural or supernatural lights, as the case may be. They preach universal grace, universal redemption, and universal charity. They require no creed, or if one has one it is considered prudent for him to keep it to himself. They reject the eternity of hell's torments, and do not trouble themselves about forming any very clear ideas about the future life, except that God is very merciful, and will be more easy and liberal in His rewards than narrow-minded churchmen would allow. Their ideas of sin are not very distinct; indeed, a gentle haze seems to overspread anything like dogma, especially if it would happen to make this life any way disagreeable. One may go indifferently to any place of worship he chooses, though it is becoming that he should have some special place. Gentlemen like Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Beecher, Mr. Talmadge, and several amongst the laity, form some of the leading lights of this very accommodating system of belief or unbelief. Our own Rationalists in this country could fraternise with them very easily without incurring the suspicion of heresy. This system is refreshing after the contemplation of Calvinism; it is like drawing a deep breath after being under the water for three or four minutes. These Universalists are very good companions, very kind neighbours, charitable and sociable, eschewing religious topics, and wishing to live in peace and let others do the same.

A conversational tone of speaking over the few matters we have mentioned is not at all disagreeable to them, and therefore we shall just touch upon them severally.

God gives grace enough to save all. fundamental doctrine of the Catholic Church, and if some do not avail themselves of the opportunities offered them it is their own fault. But then, they object, do not Catholics hold that out of the Church there is no salvation? They do, indeed; but not in the way it is generally understood. We make a distinction in the Church; we say that some belong to the souls of the Church who do not belong to the body of the faithful. There are a great many baptised who live and die in invincible ignorance, and if they live up to their lights they will be saved just as well as the best. Invincible ignorance means a contentment with the amount of religious belief and knowledge one possesses, without the slightest doubt as to anything further being requisite. If they can read and hear of the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and if they think they ought to search into them and do not, invincible ignorance ceases pro tanto. We put it in this way to give a rough notion of it, because it is not exactly defined by our theologians. Amongst educated people it comes to what an Irish servant said to a Protestant bishop, who asked him if he believed that he could be saved. 'Ye might if inconsaveable ignorance would do it.' We do not like to draw the line too hard and fast, nor is it easy to decide hic et nunc who is and who is not in invincible ignorance. Those who are and are baptised belong to the Catholic Church. Of those who are unbaptised we follow the rules of the Church by not pronouncing any judgment upon them. The Church does not judge those outside her pale. We leave them to the mercy of God, and are sure that they will fare better there than in the hands of a theologian or casuist. Our doctrine of exclusive salvation, then, is not such a dreadful thing.

The no creed or dogma of any kind system is the most extraordinary thing yet excogitated. To say that such a thing does not exist in practice is only to utter a platitude. A man must believe something or nothing, even though he does not wish to have himself tabulated. From the first ages of the Church the body corporate of professing Christians were distinguished from all others by the articles of their faith. These articles were called Creeds. There is no society of any description in this world which can have a corporate existence without some code of rules agreed upon as a condition of membership. To

make a church of less consequence than a club, a society, or a nation, seems the very strangest fancy that could enter into a man's head. Yet there is something to be said for it from a Universalist's point of view, namely, that the supernatural does not belong to any tribe or party, and should be as easy of access to all as the very air they breathe. Surely; but then the supernatural means the way to heaven; it means the belief and the consequent amount of righteousness which will qualify a man for eternal happiness after his few days of trial here. Is this to be left to each one's caprice, or is there no positive rule given us on the subject? If the way to heaven is left to each one's caprice, then the whole revelation was superfluous. We must admit that a Creator who promises us eternal life requires certain conditions to be observed in order that it may be attained. These conditions can be nothing else than truth and its influence upon our lives. Truth must be something positive. It must be a proposition asserting something, and if we know it to be true we believe it. All, therefore, that comes under the head of truth becomes at once a creed. can no more live without truth than the body can without light and air. There must be a body of truth, or truths all joined together, and proposed under a convincing motive to our understanding. If we believe those truths we must reject everything which is contrary to them.

There is in no church a complete system of truth laid down clearly and exactly, and with a proper

motive to urge our assent thereto, except the Catholic Church. It is this stern adherence to the truth she has received, and knows herself commissioned to teach, that has turned the whole myriad of freethinking and easy-thinking people against her. She alone cannot abate one jot or tittle of her deposit of faith. Nothing can make her swerve or alter. She stands out in majestic contrast against all other broken and dubious systems. She speaks with a certain voice, relying on the power within her, which guides her words and strengthens her courage even in her trials. Let us listen to what she has to say for herself, and it will be found in the mouth of the nearest priest in our neighbourhood. Sensible men would not play fast and loose with their worldly concerns in the way Universalists do with their eternal. Most of those who take this easy way of settling their spiritual matters are generally very careful in matters of business, and it looks as if they thought a slovenly life were good enough for a God who deigned to die for them and give them doctrines and examples on which their lives ought to be modelled.

This good-natured feeling which creates Universalism is decidedly adverse to the doctrine of the eternity of hell's torments. They cannot understand, good souls, how a God of mercy and goodness would consign so many creatures to everlasting flames. It is against their ideas of kindness and benevolence. Do these people consider that it is harsh to put burglars and garrotters and cutthroats

in prison for their lives? Certainly not; that is to preserve well-disposed citizens from outrages. They cannot, therefore, consider it cruel if men who outrage their Creator should suffer condign punishment. The doctrine of hell, as taught by Catholics, should make them remember one thing, at all events. When our Lord gave the commission to teach all nations to His Apostles, He said, 'He who believeth not shall be condemned.' Not to believe, therefore, is a qualification for hell, just as well as burglary, rape, or murder. To be free and easy about what is of faith is very like 'believing not,' and is a subject of re-The words of our Lord, since He has deigned to utter them, deserve at least some little attention, and are not to be cast aside by our sentimental notions. Sinners have generally a fellowfeeling, and a burglar considers the law very cruel when it sends his companion to pick oakum in a This also deserves some consideration.

Before proceeding to consider the appropriateness, not to use too expressive a term, of the eternity of hell's torments, it would be well to notice a curious phenomenon in the religious world which has lately manifested itself. The Catholic doctrine of Purgatory has been preached against and anathematised by every tribe of Reformers. The Prayer Book of the Church of England considers it an invention of crafty priests, who wanted to get money for Masses, and totally opposed to Scripture. We know that Scripture distinguishes between sin and sin, between leprosy and leprosy, and that common sense would

say that stealing an apple is a less sin than the stealing of jewels and plate of some appreciable value. Well, the doctrine of Purgatory, not being laid down in so many words in the New Testament, although there are texts that warrant it, might be impugned by certain biblicals who reject the Book of the Maccabees, and do not remember whether the limbo has been abolished, or whether there is a prison in the next world where people must go to pay the last farthing, and cannot be released until they do so. That is fair enough, although all Catholic tradition has preserved a belief in purgatory, and Jews still pray for the dead. But would one expect that the whole English Church, by a decision of the Privy Council, should approve of the doctrine of Purgatory in our day? It has done so. allowed the Essays and Reviews to pass without censure, and there it is laid down that hell is not eternal. If hell be not eternal, then what is it but purgatory? Truly, too far east is west.

Now there is one intelligible reason for the eternity of hell, and that is, that after death we remain in a state of fixity or unchangeableness. As we fall, so we lie. Whatever a man is there, that he will remain. There is neither succession nor change in eternity. It is all one. A man that knows the award promised to sin in the next world, and sins notwithstanding; who is warned over and over again, and continues in his evil ways; who prefers his passing gratifications to his future happiness, and flings away the grace of God as he does his better

instincts and senses, would sin on for ever if he could live for ever, and had strength and opportunities. Is it a hardship that such a wretch should feel the edge of God's justice when he dies? If he ought to feel it in the first moment, he ought also in the second; and so on ad infinitum, since there can be no change.

Scientists may explain away the Greek word alw and others which are translated 'eternity' in English; but they cannot get over the fact that all the Fathers, with the exception of Origen, who became a heretic, considered that they meant eternity. It is not our business to explain or give reasons for these things; but it is the business of all to remember that 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God' unprepared. Let each one look to himself and theorise as much as he pleases about matters of indifference. Eternity is not one of those.

If any sinner thinks it cruel to be condemned to hell when he dies in sin, is he not told of it? Does not every religious body, with few exceptions, proclaim this truth. You are told you will be damned if you commit a certain sin and die in it; and notwithstanding this, you go straight and commit it. Why do you sin, then, if you know the penalty? Whom have you to blame for your damnation but yourself? If you never heard of hell, one might pity you; but if you go into its jaws with your eyes open it is very hard to blame any one for your own deed. Give up sin, then, and hell will have no

terror for you. Putting away the eternity of hell as a cruelty is only a new way to justify iniquity.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

#### BIBLE CHRISTIANS.

IT was our intention to devote a chapter to each large sect of those who call themselves Christians amongst us; but, on consideration, it seemed more convenient to class a number of them, such as Wesleyans, Baptists, Methodists, and a few others under one head. These are sects who take the Bible as their ground of faith, and only differ from each other in minor matters, such as the mode of conferring baptism or of Church government. They do not claim any apostolical succession in the way of Orders, and are very fervent in their professions of their faith, such as it is. They have generally a strong list of objections to Catholicity, and they are apt to bring them forward in martial array. consider our refusal of indiscriminate reading of the Bible to be a serious defect. They object to saints, images, hierarchies, monks, nuns, and all that which the Reformation denied. Some of them are like the Calvinists in their positive doctrines, and some of them more like the Anglicans. They are generally imperfectly educated, and scarcely any of them have any knowledge of scholastic theology. Some few ministers now and again amongst them have given

evidence of a little acumen in biblical studies; but, as a rule, the higher studies are not in their line. They are to be found in greatest numbers among our mechanical and shopkeeping classes; are good shrewd men of business, and think it is as easy to measure theological questions as it would be some They are consequently very hardyards of ribbon. headed and self-sufficient. One of their Sundayschool teachers would have no difficulty in holding a discussion with a Catholic priest, and would pity his ignorance if he could not tell the chapter and verse of the text last quoted by his minister. Logic is a thing they may have heard of, and they would imagine metaphysics to be a papist name for Melchise-These are the people who get movings of the spirit, raise their heels and voices at revivals, and go home sanctified when they have made agreeable acquaintances at camp-meetings. The despondent way in which they are accustomed to look upon benighted Papists is only equalled by the hopeful sigh with which they contribute towards the conversion of the Hottentot. They are all so gifted that their women even can preach and get congregations to listen to them, although they may be old maids. Their self-sufficiency is beyond the bounds of ordinary comprehension.

The Bible is a book composed by various writers; and although written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is not written in any uniform style or after any given pattern. Each sacred writer noted down what he thought useful for the Church of his

day, in his own way, in his own style, after his own fashion, and the Spirit of Inspiration merely moved him to the substance, and kept him from errors in doctrine whilst he wrote. The books were all written in languages which are now, and have been for many years, dead. Before the invention of printing the Bible was kept, first in scrolls, and afterwards in bound manuscripts, all copied by more or less careful scribes. The best material was used for Scripture manuscripts, and art and ingenuity were profusely employed in ornamenting the sacred text. Very few churches, except rich cathedrals, could afford to buy a whole copy of the Bible. One church possessed a few books, and another others. If a whole copy got into a private library, that library Then copies of the was supposed to be enriched. Bible were seldom made in the vernacular-indeed, until shortly before the Reformation there were very few vernaculars which could properly be styled languages-because there were very few scholars except churchmen, and they used Latin for the vehicle of their thoughts. Lay scholars were all well versed in Latin, which until the fifteenth century was the language of the learned, and very fairly understood by the people in Spain, France, and Italy. Bible was held as a treasure non mittendus canibus, not to be given promiscuously; only to those who could profit by it, or knew how to read it with the reverence and care it deserves. There were extracts of the devotional parts—such as the Psalms, Proverbs, Lamentations of Jeremiah, and most of the New

Testament-always in the people's hands, and explained from the altar on Sundays. The historical parts were generally conveyed to illiterate minds by mystery-plays and paintings. The Church then had her own way of conveying a knowledge of the Bible to the faithful, even before the invention of printing, and some of our finest works of art date their origin and inspiration from those ages which are called Printing made books cheap, and settled the orthography of English, German, and other languages, which before its invention were irregular If we except the old Celtic, there was no well-formed language in the north of Europe until about the fourteenth century. Scholars would not degrade the Bible by turning it into any of those barbarous dialects; and if they did there were none able to read who could not read it better in Latin or in Greek. This accounts for the fewness of Bibles in the world before the art of printing was discovered.

After it was discovered, and that the languages began to become polished, the Church was slow to allow the laity indiscriminate reading of the Bible, and does not allow it now except with proper guards and securities. Her reasons will approve themselves to all but blind fanatics.

There are a great many historical scenes recorded in the Old Testament which are the very reverse of edifying, except to those who have skill and discrimination enough to know why they are recorded and their use as figures to foreshadow future realities. It is not an edifying thing to see young men and maidens gloating over patriarchs with their multitudes of wives and concubines, and laughing at other irregular pranks of the same hoary-headed sinners; and the prurient imagination is sure to seek out such places for their special study and delectation. Who would read the Canticle of Canticles, or Solomon's Song, in the way St. Bernard does, and not rather enjoy it after the fashion of Longinus, if left to his natural intelligence? Giving the Bible to all indiscriminately has, therefore, been condemned by the Catholic Church.

Again, those who imagine they can pick religion enough to save them out of the Bible are very much mistaken. Take any sentence of the Bible-such as 'This is My body,' and see how it has been handled by the greatest scholars. The Greek, the Syrochaldaic, the Latin, have all been construed and misconstrued; the connecting particle, which looks so simple and clear, has been made to do duty for 'represents,' 'is like,' 'is a figure of,' and a thousand other things; the hoc or this has been translated and made to mean pronouns, substances, accidents, and a variety of things; the corpus, or σαρξ, or body, has gone through another number of transformations according to the bias of commentators. Who is to settle the meaning of this? Perhaps the proverbial illiterate man, who used to go about with his mother and preach in conventicles, saying, 'Mother reads, and I expound.' Is it a private spirit? How are we to know a private spirit that is true from one that is

false? 'By their fruits you shall know them?' What fruits and what kind are they to be? We had the fruits of an itinerant preacher, some time ago, in the police-courts, who persuaded a young girl to yield to his solicitations by quoting the example of one of the Patriarchs. To allow a private spirit to give an exposition of the texts of Scripture is to destroy its authority altogether. The Scripture will be made to countenance all sorts of absurdities. There must be some authorised exposition of the sacred text, and where is that to be found? One may say that the Pope and his doctors are but private persons after all: yes, they are private persons in their capacity as individuals; but when they speak as having authority, there is a warrant that they do so inerringly. We ask no more for the Church and her representatives than was asked for and granted to the Jews before Christianity. Surely our Lord would not leave His own foundation on less solid grounds than the Church founded or ruled by Moses and the prophets.

The Church, then, very wisely guards the Bible from profanation by preventing people from making it uphold their errors and eccentricities. She does not and cannot give the Bible for indiscriminate reading until she abandons the charge which our Lord gave her through Peter—'Feed My lambs.' The Bible is a mine in which every one is not allowed to quarry except he have the proper authorisation.

The invocation of Saints is one of those doctrines

which sectaries feel perfectly certain is unscriptural. Now a few words about this. Where in Scripture is it condemned? Are we not told to 'pray for each other, that we may be saved'? If it be lawful for a man to ask another, whom he believes to be holier than himself—on the plea that 'the prayer of the just man availeth much'-to pray for him here, is it unlawful to do so when he believes that man is gone to heaven? What becomes of the article of the Creed—'the Communion of Saints'? The Catholic Church does not command her children to pray to any saint. She only declares that it is lawful to do so if they choose. In the Book of Job we have a singular instance of the invocation of Saints. God, having reproved the three friends of Job, speaks to them as follows: 'Take unto you therefore seven oxen and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust; and My servant Job shall pray for you: his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you... So Eliphaz the Themanite, and Baldad the Shuhite, and Sophar the Naamathite went, and did as the Lord had spoken to them, and the Lord accepted the face of Job. The Lord also was turned at the penance of Job when he prayed for his friends' (Job xlii. 8-10). have a case of intercession. The sectaries say, Why not go to Jesus or to God straight? Job's friends were not so impudent when they were told by God Himself to ask the intercession of a fellow-man. The same principle runs through the whole Bible: that God will hear us sooner when His friends help us

in our prayers than He would if we prayed ourselves. Every Church which does not date from yesterday practises the invocation of Saints.

It is asserted that the making of images to be adored and worshipped is forbidden in Genesis; yes, and by the Catholic Church too. She orders images to be made, both graven and otherwise, and allows them to be venerated as the prototypes would be; but no adoration is given to an image, except to the Crucifix; and that is not intended for the wood or the image upon it, but for the Son of God whom it represents. When Moses raised a brazen serpent in the desert, it was not idolatry. When the relics of a prophet raised the dead, they deserved veneration; and were handkerchiefs which Peter touched sad superstitions even when they cured the sick? practices as these are human instincts, which the Bible and the Church permits, inasmuch as they lead souls to love God, but which both would forbid if they led to idolatry. We would not despise the image of our mother; we would pay it the same respect we used to pay her in life; and why not pay respect also to images of the Saints? One might as well accuse the English nation of idolatry because it causes images of Wellington and Nelson to be raised in our squares and market-places. We repeat, this is an instinct which deserves commendation; and the Catholic Church thinks it far more profitable to direct it towards those who gave examples of a good Christian life than towards those whose examples were dangerous to faith and to morality.

The radical mistake of all those sectaries is to suppose that everything we should believe and do for our salvation is in the Bible in so many categorical words. Half the things we are to believe are not and cannot be in the Bible, because the Bible was never meant to be our teacher; it was meant simply as a book of reference, and the teaching belongs to the living voice. 'Go, teach all nations,' was the command of our Lord. It was not Go, write Bibles, or Go and give away Bibles. There was no Bible to give at the time. The New Testament was not written; and, shocking as it may sound to a Methodist or a Baptist, there was not a single copy of a single book of the Scriptures among all the Twelve Apostles. Instead of composing a Bible to help them they composed a creed, and each of them took it with him in his memory, and impressed it upon the hearts of his hearers and converts. That is the way the Church was planted. We find reference to the old Scriptures in the teaching of the Apostles; but that was chiefly for the benefit of the Jews, as they were most conscientious Bible readers. devil, in tempting our Lord, quoted the Bible at Him, and our Lord answered him after his own fashion. That is why controversialists in the Catholic Church quote Scripture, to refute the misapplication of texts by others. If Bible-worship could be got out of the heads of a good many sectaries, common sense would get in, and then they could listen and be taught. The Church does not argue, she teaches; and unless all who want to enter her fold become as little children and submit to be taught, they cannot enter her portals nor the kingdom of heaven either. This seems a very arrogant position; but the accredited messenger of God to mankind can take no other unless she forfeit her commission.

Her commission never dies, and hence none are allowed to teach unless they be sent by her. Any one who attempts to expound Scripture or teach religion, without being properly trained, ordained, and sent to do so, commits an offence against religion. Religion is thus brought into contempt and made a mockery of. Lay-preachers, male and female (for some females are ordained in America), ought to remember the punishments dealt out to Nadab and Abiu, who offered strange fire (Levit. x. 2), and that of Core, Dathan, and Abiron (Numbers xvi.). It is not a small thing for one to assume the office of teacher, when it has been so severely punished in the old law.

#### CHAPTER XXXII.

# PRESBYTERIANS, ETC.

THE vast organisation of Christian elements whose chief seat in this realm lies north of the Tweed, and its twin association which flourishes in the south and west of England, deserve some special consideration apart from the general body of Bible Christians. The Presbyterians and Independents keep strictly to the New Testament, and admit

nothing in the way of ecclesiastical history posterior to the days of the Apostles, except with a peculiar gloss of their own. When the breaking away from the unity of the Church took place in the sixteenth century, it was to be expected that some would go further than others. The Lutherans and Anglicans kept up a system of Church government analogous to the Catholic Church; but the followers of Calvin, whom we consider more consistent (after the fashion of heretics) than the other Reformers, kept up, or rather originated, a system entirely new and altogether peculiar. The Presbyterians govern by synods and assemblies, which seem more or less to claim infallibility, and the Independents place the government of the Church in each houseful of professing Christians.

In matters of criticism, scholars who take the trouble of considering the weight which the meaning of words must carry will attend to one peculiarity common to all languages, living or dead. Words have one meaning in the beginning of a language, and another when the language becomes developed; have one meaning when used in a cursory way, and another when used technically; one when used according to common speech, and another when used to designate some special craft or department of science. In our English language villain meant one thing, and so did imp, in the beginning; they bear very different meanings now. One would insult a labourer if he called him a villain now, and no one would think of writing to the Prince of Wales (as

Cardinal Wolsey did to Henry VIII.), and ask him after the health of the royal imp, his eldest son. Plant means something that grows out of the earth; the plant of a railway is a different thing. A scrupk has various meanings besides that which an apothecary gives it; and so on of hundreds of other words. Now to take up a book written in the sixteenth century, and judge a book written in this by the meaning attached to the words then, would be the most ludicrous way possible of attempting to form a proper judgment. The Reformers have taken words of the New Testament, in their scanty knowledge of Greek, and have made curious denominations of religion out of them. None have gone further in this than the Presbyterians and Independents.

When the Christian religion began to take an organised shape after the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles used the Greek words which were nearest to the offices which had to be created, and gave them a definite meaning of their own. itself is different from Απωστελλος. word means a common messenger sent from one to another, but in Christian parlance it means a different thing. Ekklyota means a collection of people called out of the Suvaywyn. Suvaywyn itself means an assembly of any kind, in its natural signification; but in Christian language it was confined, as it is at present, to meetings of Jews. Ekklyota came to mean the society of the faithful, the Church of a nation, the Church of a province, the Church of a town, and the material edifice in which each congregation assembled. Πρεσβυτερος, taken simply as it stands, means elder, and Επισκοπος means overseer, or rather overlooker. These words were transferred into the Christian mode of talking with far different significations from those they bore in the common Greek then spoken in Palestine. The first came to signify a priest, and the second a bishop, just as Mετανοιειν came to mean penance, and Συνοδος a meeting of the clergy instead of a meeting of two roads. That all these words, as they occur in the New Testament, were transferred to new meanings we judge from the constant practice and usages of the Primitive Church and the Catholic Church now.

To go back to the meaning they bore in pagan Greek would be simply to dement ourselves. The pagans had no offices corresponding to those which these words designate in the Christian dispensation. We might as well use English words now in the sense they were used by Spenser or Chaucer. It is not our province to discuss these words, and contend for the Catholic meaning of them. We can only say that the Fathers of the first, second, and third centuries understood their meaning far better than the followers of Calvin, John Knox, or Brown.

The Presbyterians could not tolerate bishops, and then they made out that all ministers were equal and could manage everything in a body, as well as perpetuate their tribe by the imposition of hands. The Congregationalists or Independents came to the conclusion that even such an ordination was not necessary, and that a number of old women

gathered together in the name of the Lord could ordain a clergyman as well as a bishop. These assertions look a little ridiculous, but they are not the less true. A number of ministers are supposed to be able to add members to their ranks, and give them a commission to teach in the Church of Scotland. If a young man is voted into the office of minister in any Congregational church he is supposed thereby to have all that is essential for his doing duty as their minister. Of course they vote for a man of parts or learning generally; but that does not interfere with the principle. They start from the principle that each congregation is independent of itself, and can transact all its concerns with regard to doctrine and discipline.

It has been remarked before, that heresies are vital in proportion to the amount of Catholic truth they retain. The Catholic Church allows a certain amount-yea, a very great amount-of the gift of infallibility to reside in the Ecclesia docens as represented by her priests scattered throughout the world, without being assembled in Synod or Council. She allows a great deal of it also to exist in the sensus fidelium, or instincts of the people, or the Ecclesia The Presbyterians take it for granted that credens. all the infallibility they want resides in their ministers and deacons or elders, the Ecclesia docens. The Congregationalists hold that all they want resides in the villagers themselves, or the Ecclesia credens, assembled in some back lane, as the case may be. Catholics hold that this infallibility resides in these various subdivisions as long as they are joined in communion with the visible Head of the Church. The others hold that it exists independent of the visible Head; nay, they would consider the presidency of a visible Head something to be execrated, as detracting from the invisible headship of Jesus Christ, who has promised that where two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them.

Two things are certain from the Gospel narrative: first, that Christ came to establish a kingdom; second, that the priesthood, which was confined to the tribe of Levi, gave way to another priesthood, which was to be for ever, according to the order of If there is to be a kingdom there Melchisedec. must be a visible head of that kingdom, otherwise it would be in vain to look for the seat of government. Our Lord said distinctly at His Last Supper, 'I dispose to you, as My Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom' (Luke xxii. 29). This kingdom was to spread all over the world, and was to be one: 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism.' How could this possibly be if there were not provision made for a supreme governor or ruler, enjoying all the plenitude of power? It is remarkable that although the Apostles had jurisdiction everywhere, and were not bound to local territories like bishops, yet Peter got supremacy over them all, and a special prayer that his faith fail not. He being converted was to con-Pope, bishops, priests, and firm  $\mathbf{his}$ brethren. deacons or inferior clergy have been considered as

essential to the Church from the very days of the Apostles until the sixteenth century. understand how this perfect system would undergo difficulties in its first establishment. An Apostle comes to a town, generally with a companion, and goes to some place of meeting, where he addresses the multitude, and, on proving his doctrines by great miracles, makes a few proselytes. These he would instruct first in the essential truths of Christianity. He would gather them together in the most convenient place, and when he had baptised and confirmed them he would ordain the most likely one amongst them either a deacon or a priest, and, if he saw suffcient reason, perhaps a bishop. Bishops were more numerous in the first ages of the Church than they were afterwards, on account of the persecutions and the need people had of being strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation. When the Apostle had organised the Church in one village or town he went off to another, leaving instructions how a new bishop was to be consecrated in case of death by a tyrant's hand or by natural causes. Differences would arise afterwards, and the Apostle would be appealed to. This gave rise to the writing of those Epistles which now form the greater portion of the New Testament. That the hierarchy must be of necessity incomplete in the beginning is natural enough, but that it should remain always in that crude and imperfect state would be inconsistent with the promises and power of our Divine Lord.

The second thing to be remembered is, that this

kingdom, being in the world, though not of the world, required some spiritual power and spiritual ties to keep it together. That power was the power of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven, or the power of the keys, as it is generally styled. That every one who chose could use these keys, or every one called upon by an assembly to do so, is perfectly absurd. 'As My Father sent Me I send you,' i.e. with power to send others to take your places when you cannot be present, or to succeed you in the ministry when you depart this life. 'Let no one take to himself this ministry except he be called as Aaron was.' The Church has always been most jealous of this power. None but bishops could ordain, and although in the ceremony of Ordination all the priests present impose hands as well as the bishop, yet their imposition is considered as not essential. A bishop can ordain without the presbytery, but the presbytery cannot ordain without him. Moreover, even when the radical power is given in Ordination, jurisdiction is necessary before it can be exercised; and this jurisdiction resides in the bishop for his diocese, and in the Pope for the Universal Church. The character of Ordination can never be taken away, but jurisdiction can.

Of course when innovators did away with the Sacrifice of the Mass and with absolution from sins, there was no room for the exercise of any divine power. There being nothing requiring divine assistance in the worship of a Presbyterian or Independent meeting-house, the members of both are consis-

tent enough in not caring for any ordination or jurisdiction except what they can give themselves, and as nemo dat quod non habet, they are all of course sheep without a shepherd.

A Christian who does not see the necessity of heavenly power, which has descended in an unbroken line from Jesus Christ Himself for the government and spiritual feeding of the Church, has not the first rudimentary notions of faith or devotion. no use in arguing any point of Catholic doctrine with a Presbyterian or Independent until he first acknowledges or gets the grace to see the necessity of Orders. They generally run off from that point, and attack Saints and images and Mariolatry and what They even get up arguments a posteriori, to satisfy their minds that a hierarchy and a priesthood which allow these unscriptural practices must have lost the pure milk of the Word. All this sort of reasoning is out of the line altogether. Let one thing be admitted or rejected, and then proceed to minor points. This mode of reasoning is the more consistent, it makes one feel the ground safe as he proceeds; and when anything is not admitted let the conversation cease at that point, and not be resumed until it is, or a strong and sound reason given why it cannot. A cheap sophistical way of reasoning is to scamper off from practice to theory, from theory to practice, from discipline to doctrine, from doctrine to discipline, and trying to refute the truth of doctrine by abuses in discipline. It is of the utmost consequence not to be drawn away from any one point until it be settled to the mutual satisfaction of the instructor and the person receiving instruction. Settle the point of hierarchy with those who belong to an unhierarchical sect, and then proceed to the doctrines taught and the warrants for their teaching.

One thing is plain from the custom of the Congregationalists, and that is that their minister is their hired servant, and that he is obliged, by the contract for his living, to preach what will please his audience. To make the Church the slave of the State has always been considered a misfortune. To make it the slave of a township or village must have been the ne plus ultra of misfortunes. Such a thing could happen only on Reformation principles. The people are to be taught by messengers sent to them, not by messengers voted into a pulpit at their vestries.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## LUTHERANS.

LUTHER'S place in the history of the Reformation is unique. He began the great heresy or heresies which yet continue side by side with Catholicity; and although his writings are strong and his language intemperate, he never went the lengths of many of his contemporaries. His principles lead directly to Rationalism; but he himself, chiefly under the milder influence of Melanchthon, stopped short at

a form of religion not far removed from schism. The reason of this is that he could not put aside the plain meaning of the words of Jesus Christ, 'This is My Body;' and hence he always retained a belief in the Real Presence, although he caused it to be shorn of all Catholic doctrine, inasmuch as he allowed the substance of bread to remain with the substance of Jesus Christ, and came at length, in one of his furious moods against the Mass, to say that He was there only whilst being consumed. Of course he railed against the hierarchy and the priesthood, like the rest of his followers; but the countries which adopted his tenets have preserved a species of hierarchy, and the abolition of the Mass only reached to Low Masses, as the Lutherans of Germany and the more northern countries still preserve a sort of celebration like unto High Mass.

Luther's success shows that some countries were ripe for changes in the system of the Catholic Church as it existed in the beginning of the sixteenth century. When we read the description of the grand courts and the extensive powers of the prince bishops of Germany, of the pomp and splendour which was attached to certain abbacies, of the rich possessions which supported religious foundations, and of the general tendency towards godless culture which was encouraged by the Medici, we are not surprised at reading of the general want of piety and corruption of manners which manifested themselves among Catholics. A twofold spirit arose in consequence. In Italy we see St. Cajetan, aided by a bishop, John

Peter Carafa (afterwards Pope), who laid aside his mitre and crozier to join a priest in leading a more perfect life in community, founding an Order of what is styled regular clerks. The Barnabites were started in Milan, and St. Jerome Emilian instituted an Order St. Ignatius Loyola did the same in in Venice. The spirit which animated these holy men was that of a higher kind of clerical life, which should spend itself, in the perfect observance of the evangelical counsels, in attending to the wants of the faithful both by word and example. The Society of Jesus have far excelled their contemporary Orders; but all had the same aim of reforming the Church after the manner of the Church, by the practice of the sanctity she inculcated, but which so few cared to follow. Self-denial, humility, and obedience were their leading principles.

The other spirit, which took possession of Luther and his friends, was of quite an opposite nature. That the practice of virtue was at a low ebb everyone must acknowledge who reads with a candid mind the history of that period. The Reformers of the Latin race determined to raise it by going back to the Gospel models. The Reformers of the Teutonic race took the opposite road. It was a new thing for kings to find that their exactions and self-gratifications were merely trifles; that they could curb the ambition and rob the coffers of ecclesiastics without a scruple, and thereby understand that they were doing a service to the Church. It was a most original idea. There was a strange admixture of religion and

profligacy in the world at that time. Great potentates indulged their passions in a variety of ways. They gave themselves concubines, made unjust wars, indulged their appetites, practised cruelty on their enemies, and sometimes on their friends; but when they returned to a cool consciousness of their misdeeds they did great penance, and generally a monastery or a cathedral sprang up from their spirit of atonement. They were not theologians, of course, and had to submit to theological decisions in matters above their comprehension. Now they saw things with a new light. Every man became his own theologian, and no longer held his soul in the ugly bondage of a strict or conscientious confessor. It was a delightful revelation. 'Let these Churchmen fight it out, and we shall come in for the spoils,' they seemed to say; and as they presided at each discussion, and heard metaphysical subtleties which could find no room prepared for them in their heads, they laughed at the fallen friars and upright monks who beat the drum ecclesiastic, and

'Went on refining,

And thought of convincing when they thought of dining,'

or something more agreeable to their inclinations. It was a curious time: these electors and petty kings setting professors by the ears, and enjoying their tours de force in the arena of the Church, whilst they smacked their lips at the prospect of rich abbeys falling to their share. Carlostadius, Zwinglius, Ecolampadius, Melanchthon, and others, all respectable ecclesiastics, canons, professors, and dignitaries, fol-

lowed Luther a great part of his way, and then pushed further on their own lines of thought. They differed, of course, as to the formation of a new creed; but they all agreed in one thing. They took to wiving. Wives for old ecclesiastics seemed a special attraction held out by the Reformation. Not one of them missed taking a wife—and some of them took two—whatever they might miss in other matters. How those landgraves and margraves rejoiced at the fine fat religion that was being prepared for them!

Luther began by finding fault with indulgences. He did not condemn Indulgences because he thought them, like his less learned followers, to be licenses to commit sin. If indulgences meant leave for old ecclesiastics to wed young wives, the abolition of fasting, a leave for potentates to have two wives at a time, or permission for nuns and friars to break their vows, Luther would have heartily approved of them. No: indulgences included two Catholic doctrines which the Reformers condemned in no measured terms; namely, works of supererogation and the power of the apostolic keys.

The Catholic doctrine regarding indulgences is deduced from the nature of merit. No action can be meritorious unless done in the state of grace. Hence no one can gain an indulgence unless he be first free from sin. Indulgences, then, have nothing at all to do with sin or its remission.

Every good action has two or three aspects. There is the merit which deserves an eternal reward — Because I was hungry and you gave Me to eat,

&c. There is the satisfactory, which atones for forgiven sin; and the intercessory, which may be presented to heaven cujus intuitu God may bestow a favour on the friend of the doer.

The meritorious part is crowned by the 'Just Judge.' The intercessory part is like the goodness of Abraham and Job and others, which obtained blessings for their posterity and friends even in this world; or which keeps off the wrath of God from evidoers, like the actions of the just in Sodom before the escape of Lot.

The satisfactory are the troubles, difficulties, and severe trials which the Saints undergo in this world; which are sometimes due to past sins, and sometimes sent them without a sin at all. Of the first kind might be numbered the hardships, shipwrecks, and prisons endured by St. Paul even when a Saint, 'because,' as he says himself, 'I persecuted the Church.' Of the second are preëminently the sufferings of our Divine Lord, next those of His Immaculate Mother, St. John Baptist, and other innocent but penitential Saints.

These satisfactions are not needed by the Saints for themselves, because they have no sins to atone for; and from the article of the Communion of Saints we hold that they are capable of being applied to other converted sinners, who have not time or opportunity or health to do satisfactory works themselves. This collection of satisfactory works is called the treasury of the Church, and the keeper of them is he to whom God has entrusted the keys of the king-

dom of heaven, to bind and loose whatsoever is right and becoming.

In the Penitential Canons of the ancient Church very severe works had to be done, for a number of years, in order to satisfy for sin; by her new discipline certain good works are appointed instead, of a lighter nature, and a portion of the spare satisfactions are applied, under certain conditions, to make up for their deficiency. That this treasury should have a duly qualified steward is only part of the wise economy which governs the Church; and as 'obedience is better than sacrifice,' so submitting to the conditions imposed for the gaining of an indulgence has in itself a new enhancement of the act or acts performed. This is, in brief, the theory of indulgences, and it is certainly a most charitable and consistent part of the Church's teaching.

It is not easy to understand at first; but a familiar illustration will make it plain. Supposing a man insulted another by calling him bad names or striking him. He wants to make reparation, or, as we should say, to make compensation. He humbles himself so far as to ask pardon, and the offended party is so generous as to remit the fault. The other then proceeds to make some reparation, and exceeds what is due to the man he has offended, like Zaccheus, who restored fourfold when he cheated a man. The generous man refuses to accept this extra satisfaction, and the offender, instead of taking it back, adds to it. It remains there, then, for some luckless wight who has not generosity enough, and

is given to him by a kind steward, when and as he pleases, on certain easy conditions. This simile will explain in some sort of way what theologians mean by the treasury of the Church, of which the Pope holds the keys.

The Penitential Canons, we may remark, were made by the Church, and are not to be found in the New Testament. Something like them is indicated in St. Paul's treatment of the incestuous Corinthian; indeed, enough to show that such matters were left to the prudence and wisdom of the rulers of the Church. That the Pope could dispense with the Penitential Canons, and substitute something else in their place, or even nothing if he chose, is clear enough to any Catholic. That he could distribute the treasures of the Church upon conditions he chooses to place is just as easy to understand. This is, in a few words, the whole theory of indulgences, with all their years and quarantines.

The works which the Church considers as partaking of the nature of satisfaction are three—fasting, prayer, and alms-deeds. She may prescribe any one of the three which she pleases, or all three for that matter, as the condition of an indulgence. It so happened that, at the time of Luther, St. Peter's Church in Rome was being built, and the Pope required money for the completion of that splendid edifice. He attached indulgences to the contributions which the faithful might give for the work, and preachers were chosen in various places to bring the spiritual profit attached to this special charity

home to the faithful. This task was given to the Dominicans in Saxony, and the Augustinians expected it. Because they did not get it, Luther, who was then an Augustinian friar, grew jealous, and attacked the indulgences themselves, as a mode of ousting their patrons. This gave rise to saying that the indulgences were sold—a very convenient way of branding them with infamy—and was the small spark that set Europe on fire with religious conflagrations.

As nothing could be done against so solemn a work without a show of theological reasons, and as it was difficult to find one to hold water against so obvious a work of charity or religion as the erection of a temple in Rome that would be an honour to Christendom, he was obliged to seek for some that would appeal to all the feelings of his countrymen. He therefore attacked indulgences in their doctrinal He went further. He denied merit to any actions, no matter how good. He attributed all to He denied therefore free will, and maintained that God alone was free. He denied satisfaction after that, and went on some texts of St. Paul, such as 'The just man lives by faith,' and several others. He maintained that justice resided in no one, but only that the justice of Christ was imputed to him; and, like the old Donatists of whom St. Augustine writes, he made justification be an imputation of the merits of Christ, which plaster a wound in order to hide it, but not to extract the sore or corruption it conceals.

Purgatory, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and a good many other Christian matters of devotion had to be swept away now, and they were very rudely indeed, with a severe German broom which left nothing after it.

Works of supererogation were all wrong, when this sweeping principle was once established; and what was of greater merit than the celibacy of the clergy and monastic vows? These were not temporary privations, adopted for a few days like fasting, but mortifications which lasted for a lifetime.

The grand idea predominating in the cleverness of Luther's destructive system was the notion that what he abolished was derogating from the honour due to Christ. It was like Petruchio's starving of Catherine, because nothing that was offered was good enough for her to eat. The worship of the Blessed Virgin and Saints, which Catholics thought then and think now raised their ideas of religion up by gradual steps to prepare for the grand honour due to God Himself, was condemned, as so much taken away from His honour. The Mass was a derogation from the Sacrifice of Calvary, when Catholics thought and think that it was done in remembrance of Him, and brought Calvary home to them. of all his other abolitions, in which he was followed by his sympathisers in Switzerland and England, though from different motives.

One thought runs through all this process. Luther spread the Reformation by legalising those things which were, before his time, considered as sins; and

he found favourable listeners amongst all nations in which there ran Teutonic blood. His religious teaching went through them like an agreeable electric shock, and there it has remained. It led to Rationalism and irreligion and immorality in his own day, and at the present moment the most immoral countries are those where the doctrines of the Reformation have taken firmest root.

It is not difficult to convert a Lutheran. If a German Protestant is ever pure or noble enough to despise the Reformers for their bad lives, and the laxity of morals they have introduced, his coming into the Catholic Church is but a single step.

There is one effect proceeding from Lutheranism and Calvinism which may be better described in the following chapter, and that is the mercenary slavery to which the ministers of the reformed religion were introduced, first by the confiscation of Church property, and next by the absence of the Sacrament of Orders.

It has been asserted in a former chapter that the leading idea of the Reformation was destructiveness. Every phase of error, from the destruction of the Mass to the destruction of the statues of the Saints, carried this spirit out. Each Reformer began with some abuse which he perceived in the Church, and in weeding out this abuse he generally cleared away every good plant which sprang up beside it. Luther abolished indulgences, and then he abolished good works, merits, satisfactions, penances, everything which gave holiness to man's life and honour

to the Crucified. So consecutive and consistent is the whole theory of Catholic doctrine and practice, that if but one link is taken out of the chain all the rest will follow. Every heresy shows the oneness of the Church and her consistency.

# CHAPTER XXXIV.

#### ANGLICANS.

ENGLAND did not escape from the wave of heresy which passed over Europe in the sixteenth century. Lutherans and other Reformers tried to spread their doctrines quietly and unobtrusively at first; but when Henry VIII. wrote his book on the seven Sacraments, which obtained for him from the Pope the title of 'Defender of the Faith,' he carried his theory into practice by causing rather rude hands to be laid upon the broachers of heretical tenets. No one would have thought that the royal author would himself. in a short time, become the most thoroughgoing advocate of Reformation principles. Henry did not introduce many heresics. He simply assumed the supremacy, and denied the Pope's jurisdiction. step he saw useful on account of the Pope's unwillingness to divorce him from Catherine of Aragon, and give him leave to marry a more youthful and beautiful lady in her place. We need not tell the oft-told story again, nor describe the character of Cranmer and his coadjutors. Henry squandered 1,800,000L, which was hoarded up by his father, in the very

beginning of his reign. His war with the French king put him a little more in debt, and his expensive pastimes were not calculated to alleviate his difficulties. Surrounded with unscrupulous ministers, and unaccustomed to curb either his lust or his cruelty, it is not to be wondered at that those who denied his supremacy, when he thought proper to assume it, soon met with their deaths. He then confiscated, first the minor and then the greater monasteries, and seized the proceeds to fill his exchequer. He put people to death for Popery and heresy as the fit seized him, and died leaving England in a sad state.

It was in the reign of Edward VI. that the doctrines of Luther and Calvin were introduced by law into England, and a sort of liturgy arranged to replace the Mass. Mary tried to revive the Catholic religion, but did not succeed; indeed, heresy seemed to have crept like a cancer throughout England, and when Elizabeth ascended the throne, she found very little difficulty in introducing the system adopted the reign of Edward VI. The system then established and since retained, with some modifications, forms what is called the Anglican Communion as by law established in England, and lately disestablished in Ireland. It is difficult to give a summary of what Anglicans believe, as there is such a divergence amongst themselves, and some of their dignitaries glory in the fact that the Church of England admits all manner of doctrines, from the baldest Rationalism up to an imitation of Catholicity. The external semblance of a hierarchy was always preserved. Archbishops, bishops, deans, archdeacons, rectors, vicars, and curates have never ceased to be, in name at least, in the Church of England. machinery of a working and respectable Church was thus maintained, and the revenues were ample, and more than ample, for its support. During the seventeenth century, before the traditions of Catholic theology had completely died out, there was some vigour in her schools, and a certain amount of piety observable in the writings of her ministers; but this life seemed gradually to become extinguished as Roman Catholics became fewer. The arms of the Anglican Church rusted for want of foes to fight with them. In the eighteenth century, infidelity and scepticism were so rife, that the whole bent . of the writings in what they called divinity was against atheism. In the words of an able writer, 'Nothing could be more unlike the tone of the Fathers than the cold, passionless, and prudential theology of the eighteenth century; a theology which regarded Christianity as an admirable auxiliary to the police force, and a principle of decorum and cohesion in society, but which carefully banished from it all enthusiasm, veiled or attenuated all its mysteries, and virtually reduced it to an authoritative system of moral philosophy. . . . Every preacher was employed in showing that Christianity was in all respects perfectly in accordance with human reason.'\* To the Erastianism of the Church must be \* Rationalism in Europe, by W. E. H. Lecky, chap. ii. p. 163.

attributed the decline of its spirituality. When the king or the queen became the fount of jurisdiction within the realm, ministers of state became the patrons of Churchmen. Sycophancy and time-serving were of course engendered in aspirants after ecclesiastical promotion, and the higher virtues of clerical life became obstacles, rather than otherwise, to the higher places in the Church. The Thirtynine Articles of the Church left the door open to all sorts of interpretations, and the authorisation of private judgment caused many to avail themselves of their privilege.

When Churchmen could marry as well as laymen there was nothing heroic in entering the clerical ranks. The Church, with its liberal endowments, was found to afford, in every sense, a comfortable living to the junior sons of gentlemen; and these junior sons accordingly, unless their talents could promise them distinction at the bar or in the diplomatic service, availed themselves of their several opportunities. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge moulded the future ministers of the Church, just as they moulded young men who aspired to any other learned profession. There was no distinct training or discipline for one profession more than another, except that the young minister entered on his duties, if he chose to be a parson, immediately after his university course, and the young lawyer, doctor, or statesman just then began his technical training. The spiritual life of the clergy must thus have been of the most lifeless description.

idea or notion that they were told off to read the Scriptures and preach was all they had when the bishop laid hands upon them for the ministry. In some cases, of course, men entered the Church with conscientious motives, and strove manfully to fit themselves for their pastoral duties; but this was their own work, they did not find it in the system. When the doctrine of the Christian Priesthood and Sacrifice was denounced as idolatrous, it would be illogical to expect any special training for men who only required a good voice and a gentlemanly bearing in order to fulfil the meagre duties of a parish-church.

The one good derived from the system, and which afterwards bore excellent fruit, was that the ministers of the State Church were gentlemen by education and had respectable connections. The Church was thus preserved from fanatical preachers, who would find their work gone if they could not stir up fervour and bigotry. Alongside this benefit sprang up an evil also. These gentlemanly parsons had no sympathy with the poor, except in the way of condescending patronage. The poor might be patronised, but the rector or vicar was a being of some other order; and although they considered him, to a certain extent, sacred, they considered him a good deal more of the class above themselves. The Church having no positive doctrines to enforce, the work of spiritual teaching came to almost nothing, and ignorance of God and His mysteries and revelation was the consequence. The only religion left among the

poor was a hereditary and deep-rooted hatred of Popery.

This state of things gave rise to a multitude of sects, led by earnest men, who wanted something more Godlike in their worship than the formularies of the Book of Common Prayer and a cold dry sermon, upon Christian metaphysics, read from the pulpit on a Sunday. These men formed churches, and got the name of Dissenters. The Dissenters were active and zealous in the cause they undertook; their rude psalmody and vociferous hymn-singing gratified themselves and filled them with some sort of enthu-They became as hostile to the State Church as she had been to the Catholic; and thus hatred engendered hatred, as the Church went downward, until Christian charity seemed to be one of the dead It was high time to stop those self-constituted pastors, who were filling the Church; and consequently in the year 1661, according to Macaulay, 'episcopal ordination was, for the first time, made an indispensable condition for Church preferment in England.' The members of the Church then began to be a little more particular, just one hundred years after the Reformation was first established. Spasmodic efforts of the same nature have been made from time to time since, but things remain much as they were. It is certain that at the present day there is less spirituality and less religion in the Anglican Church than there was after the Reformation took Every minister has more liberty to teach in his pulpit what he would be then hung for than he ever had before. It was a curious anomaly to allow men private judgment, and then make them teach the doctrines of Barlow or Parker, or else unfrock them. To make men subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles, and give them leave to interpret them as they please, is not a whit better. We remember hearing an Oxford graduate once say that he was about to take Orders in the Anglican Church, although his faith was all but Catholic. 'How can you do so,' asked a conscientious friend, 'since you condemn the system and teaching of the Church, and ought to be a Roman Catholic?' 'O, the easiest thing in the world! Ill just cram up "Tract XC.," and go in for the thing at once. Lots of fellows do it.'

The conclusion which may safely be drawn from the history of Anglicanism during three hundred years is that it is a huge skeleton, kept in cohesion by self-interest. This seems very disagreeable, but it is unavoidable, when we see an unordained hierarchy, unadorned churches, vague formularies-all the outside appearance of a Church from which the soul has fled-only galvanised into existence by silver and gold. It is respectability personified. Any amount of vice and iniquity may stalk complacently and agreeably through society, provided it be outwardly decked with politeness and urbanity. We are far from concluding that the bishops and ministers of the Establishment are vicious. God forbid. We know many of them, and know them to be estimable men, who do a great deal of good, according to their lights, and who are more worthy of their offices and duties than were the men who first broke away from Rome, and whose history they cannot read without blushing for their origin. We do not speak of or judge individuals; we only address ourselves to the system under which they minister.

Converts from Anglicanism are very numerous, and to lay down rules for their instruction would be impossible. Some of them are ignorant—perfect tabulæ rasæ, on which you may write anything; some of them have a few biblical notions, crudely put together; some of them rise to the pitch of trying to find out a religion for themselves by promiscuous reading; some of them are in a complete fog, and the only definite notion they have is that they know some Papists, and find they are not such monsters as they expected them to be.

The best plan to adopt would be this: Seeing that Anglicanism is eclectic in its nature and composition, and that all systems are tolerated in it, find out in each special case what the person believes and what he rejects. You can easily then classify him under some of the systematised heresies, and treat his case accordingly. There is no other way of satisfactory instruction.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

#### GREEKS.

ALLUSION has already been made to the origin and nature of the Greek schism.\* The points of difference between Greeks and Latins were once very trifling; but length of separation has widened the breach more by the growth of different customs than by the addition of new errors. The Greeks still believe all those things which the Reformation considered abuses and errors of the Church of Rome. They have a hierarchy, with patriarchs to preside over them. They have the Sacrifice of the Mass; and the most splendid ceremonies, gorgeous vestments, picturesque decorations, and solemn chants accompany its celebration. Indeed the Latin rite seems stiff and meagre compared with the Greek. All the beauties of Oriental imagery find expression in their services, and every invention of Eastern art and science is laid under contribution for the ornamentation of their churches. Their liturgies are very old, and they preserve them still, and celebrate their mysteries in the ancient language of classic Greece—the language in which St. Paul spoke to the Areopagus, and in which St. Gregory Nazianzen proclaimed the sanctity of images. They celebrate the Sacrifice in leavened bread, and in this only do they differ from the Latins. In some rites, it is said, they give Communion in two kinds; but that is not cer-

<sup>\*</sup> Chap. xvii.

tain, and would be unnecessary, as they all believe in Transubstantiation. They practise auricular confession, give Extreme Unction, and hold to the seven Sacraments as fervently and firmly as any Catholic. They venerate the Blessed Virgin with a devotion that does them credit. They have their canonised Saints, and honour them on the recurring festivals with pomp and magnificence. They pray for the dead, and have also the doctrine of indulgences very much the same as we have. They have images of sacred things and miraculous pictures enough to feed the hostility of a whole continent of Calvinists. Their custody of and devotion to sacred relics exceeds even the most fervent aspirations of devout Catholics. In former times they quarrelled in the Councils about the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, or rejected the Filioque in the Nicene Creed; but we question whether they are much given to hairsplitting in theological matters at present, as they are generally occupied in trying how to live, and make the temporal and eternal agree with each other. So far as the Ecclesia credens is concerned there is very little difference between us, and so far as the Ecclesia docens is instructed there is less; but there is a wide gulf between us, taken corporately, and it is no easy matter to bridge it over. Pointing out the obstacles in the way may do some good, and therefore it is well to mention them. Some are political, some are social, and some are founded in ignorance and deep-rooted prejudices.

The great cause of the schism was political.

When an emperor finds an obedient and obsequious clergy he is sure to make them his servants. leon the Great envied the Khedive of Egypt his command and power over the Mufti, and got the idea into his head that if he could reduce Pius VI. to the condition of a Mufti he could control the destinies of all the Catholics in the world. after emperor, and king after king, have tried to do the same throughout the whole history of the Catholic Church. They have always longed to wield the spiritual power after a certain fashion, in order to give the temporal more authority. The great struggles against the Popes in the Middle Ages, the wars waged against them by Catholic sovereigns, and the frequent exiles they had to endure, all sprang from the idea that to make the spiritual power an instrument in the hand of a temporal lord would be the ne plus ultra of human power on earth. Not only Popes, but bishops and priests, have suffered imprisonment and martyrdom for the sake of the freedom and independence of their spiritual autho-Some kings were enabled to qualify the full exercise of the spiritual power within their dominions. and wrung concessions from Pontiffs in angustia temporum by what are called concordats; but few succeeded in making themselves spiritual heads of the Church in the West until Henry VIII. of England. The Czar of Russia succeeded long before, and the debasement of the Church in the East to-day is owing to the fact. When all the patriarchs and bishops are his creatures, and when their jurisdiction is bounded

by his edicts or ukases, we must be prepared for the consequences. The bishops and clergy of Russia—which is the largest portion of the Greek Church—are simply the slaves of the Czar. He is in political antagonism with the rest of Europe, and has long been; and he is not likely to allow his subjects to pay even the slightest allegiance to any prince or potentate, ecclesiastical or secular, outside his realm.

The social life of Russia can scarcely be understood by us. Until within a few years ago the Russians were divided into freedmen or quasi nobles and slaves or serfs. The serfs were freed by the present Emperor, and do not yet know how to use their liberty. The upper classes are bound to the Court of a despot by chains of self-interest, which it is very difficult to sunder; the others follow the example of their betters. Russia is thus one huge mass of people whose law is the will of the Czar, and justice or mercy may sway his councillors; but he is the one authority. His policy is to keep at enmity with the rest of Europe, and Napoleon saw that when he determined to conquer him, but failed. Napoleon said that 'if you scratch a Russian you are sure to find a Tartar;' and so every new evidence of their conduct in war and their treatment of the vanquished prove. It is a singular fact that Catholics are better treated under the absolute rule of the Sultan than they are under the Christian rule of the Czar. He persecutes the Poles in a most inhuman way, and wherever his Tartar majesty gains power he makes short work of Catholic priests and people.

The next obstacle to the conversion of the Greeks is their ignorance, and the prejudices which arise from it. All travellers in Russia, Greece, and the Levant · agree that the schismatic clergy-or the Orthodox, as they call themselves—are very low in the scale of learning and education. They have a catechism something like the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians, and that is about all the theology they learn. A catechist in an Irish parish, who sometimes can neither read nor write, knows just as much in regard to the doctrines and practices of his Church. They have not the luck of the Anglican clergy of being richly endowed, although they have permission to marry, provided they do so before receiving priest's orders; and consequently they have to struggle for a livelihood. A clergyman who has a slender income and a houseful of children to support in decency has very little time for study when the duties of his ministry are discharged. The Russian rural clergy are therefore so low in the scale of literature and cultivation that they are despised by the people to whom they have to minister. The only respectable members of the clergy are the celibate ones, and these generally live in monasteries or organised societies. They are a little in advance of their married brethren, but very inferior as a class to the Latins. It is from these the bishops are generally taken, as a married bishop is a thing unknown in the Oriental Church. From this mass of ignorance proceeds a copious crop of weeds, which send forth seeds of prejudice. The lower clergy

are bitterly opposed to the Latin Church. They consider themselves more ancient, more in accordance with primitive discipline, and are soured by being despised by their Latin neighbours. Some time ago a university was started at Athens for the superior education of the candidates for the priesthood; but when the students read the ancient records, and knew what the discipline of their Church was before the ninth century, they nearly all joined the communion of Rome. This put a stop for a time to the efforts of the well disposed in the matter of the education of the clergy.

The Greeks have been partially separated from us for ten centuries, and totally for four; and during that time they have produced no work that was ever worth translation into any European language. is not our purpose to detail the minor superstitions which ignorance has engendered and fostered amongst them; nor to animadvert upon the slovenly manner in which the offices of religion are carried out in rural places; much less do we wish to speak unfavourably, although we might, of their morality as a body, or the scandals which help so materially the secret and socialistic societies which progress so thrivingly in Russia proper at the present day. The Russian Church has done nothing in the way of missions to the heathen, and she lives simply on the will of the Czar.

At the beginning of the Reformation several of the leading lights of that curious development of thought tried to fraternise with the Russians and Greeks, if it were only to spite Rome, and get valid orders; but their advances were rejected with disdain. Lately, about the time of the Pananglican Synod, a similar league was proposed, and a Monsignor Popoff came over to assist at the proceedings. He found Anglicanism so full of heresies and false principles that he could promise nothing from the old Greeks. The Bonn Conference also thought to shake hands with the Greeks, but their advances met with a similar repulse. If it were not for the Czar and the few other obstacles we have named, there would not be much difficulty in uniting the Greeks to the Latins.

The only serious point on which they differ from us is the supremacy of the Pope. The Immaculate Conception they accept; all the decrees of the Council of Trent they accept; and if they accepted the personal rule of the Pontiff, they would have no difficulty in accepting his infallibility also. The bridge, therefore, between us is a very narrow one; but there is a great unwillingness to cross it. They have crossed a few times; but when they went back they kept to their old notions, and have continued in them still.

In the matter of the supremacy they admit that St. Peter received from our Lord jurisdiction over the rest of the Apostles and over the Universal Church. They have no wordy explanations or frothy declamations to utter against the usual acceptance among Christians of the doctrine which Catholics derive from the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. They do not explain Herpog to signify a pro-

fession of faith, or go into the windings in which the first reformers of the West wriggled so unhandsomely. They have better sense than that, notwithstanding their ignorance, because they respect tradition, and it is decisive. They maintain only that their own Patriarch is the successor of St. Peter, and not the Pope of Rome. They have their subdivisions, of course, as all those who break away from the centre of unity must have; but they could be easily arranged if only a good understanding could be brought about.

It is sad to look upon their present state, which is the natural consequence of a secular ruler having arrogated to himself what was given to the successor of St. Peter. Everything is there from which a good Church could be made if they only could be brought to see what was for their good, and were allowed to adopt it. Who knows what may be in store for them even in this generation? Their wars and rumours of wars may reverse their whole policy, and bring a new state of things amongst them. Providence guides the destinies of men after very unheard-of ways. He has permitted British power to sever an important limb from His Church in Europe, and He is using the same instrument to increase that Church in the East. According to the signs of the times, England seems bent upon crippling the Czar, and as religious freedom and fair play now find an open field under her flag, and have already carried the faith to nations who submit to her sway, it is not amiss to be sanguine as to what the Church may do in the future under the protection of England. Strange events will never cease to happen.

Greeks or Russians seldom apply for reception into the Catholic Church in the West. They generally do so in their own country when they begin to admire the devotion and self-sacrifice of the Latin missionaries; but when they do, the process of conversion is a very simple and a very short one. They have nothing to unsay, nothing to acquire. They have all but the supremacy, and that they generally adhere to as soon as they begin to see that the true Church of God on earth cannot possibly have two independent heads antagonistic to one another. It would be well, however, by way of caution, to see whether a Russian or Greek who wishes to become a Catholic belongs to any secret Secret societies were not condemned in Russia, and are not at present, except they break out into such pastimes as taking aim at crowned The newspapers gave us some examples of their excesses lately, and evidently the Russ is not as prudent as his more Western Freemason brother, for he has allowed women to become members of the craft. Nihilism is the new name given to their societies, and a not unfitting one. away all definite belief and life, and strive for something indefinite, is well termed Nihilism.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

#### RITUALISTS.

THAT a reaction should take place in the Church of England against the coldness and lifeless formality which had frozen so many generous hearts nearly three hundred years was but natural. wonder is that the thaw did not come sooner. There was an occasional attempt at infusing life in the carcass of religion which the Reformers left behind them. Laud tried, but was sent to the Tower for his pains; and scarcely was there any authoritative attempt made from his day down to the present, except what was done by a few ecclesiastical writers. The Tractarian movement, which started in Oxford about fifty years ago, was the first serious return to the primitive faith of England. was set on foot by a few zealous and learned men, who educated themselves in scholastic philosophy, and read carefully the Fathers of the early Church. They found, of course, that SS. Augustine, Gregory, and others were sound Papists, and that the gentlemen who composed the Anglican Church formularies were the very reverse of saints. They published their ideas in tracts and larger tomes, and astonished the world by showing that a Catholic spirit had taken possession of the main centre of Protestant learning. The history of this movement has been written by many of the actors in it, and since their

day the tide of conversions to Catholicity from the ranks of the noblest and most learned has set steadily in, and still continues.

The Tractarians concerned themselves more with the doctrines of the Catholic Church than with her discipline. They saw at once that heresy and schism were great sins, and that no one could abide in either once he discovered he was there, without making himself worse every day. It took a long time for some of them to see this, inasmuch as early heretical teaching had clouded their understandings; but at length see it they did; and when there were no hopes of seeing England united to the Church, they very prudently united themselves to her, and set splendid examples of self-sacrifice for truth to those they left behind them, many of whom followed them in course of time. The doctrinal nature of the tracts is patent to every one, and their fruits can be counted by hundredfolds.

Some of their very first writers, however—notably one of them, who gave his name to the new school of thought—remained as they were, because they did not see their way very clearly out of their position; and when doctrinal writings issued from their pens afterwards, there was a sort of mist observable in their ecclesiastical horizon. From the two a new school issued which embraces nearly all Catholic doctrines, and uses Catholic books; which revived the old rites of the Church of England, and laid great store by postures and vestments; members of which began to confess, to give and receive

absolution, and by degrees came to think themselves veritable priests, and found people to believe them in turn.

Their tendency to grand vestments and elaborate ceremonial procured them the name of Ritualists, although Ceremonialists would be a more fitting title. Ritualists say hard things, and write harder things in their accredited organs, about the Church of Rome; but that looks more like a lame defence of their position than a real reformer-like hatred of her doctrines and practices. Hard things have been written and said about themselves, both by their companions of less-advanced views in the Establishment, and by Catholics. They have been called all sorts of names, and designated with opprobrious epithets. Little good can come of this. Of course it is offensive to a real Protestant to see the mummeries and errors of Rome, as he thinks, growing up in his very presence, and having a charm for his children. It is equally offensive to a Catholic to see clergymen of the Church of England dress like priests and say Mass like them, and sit in a confessional, where they might be told secrets which they have not the grace to keep. All these ways of looking at Ritualists give rise to the ill things that are said of them; but prejudices are never fair in their judgments. Now if any body of men think themselves real priests, having real Orders, and really constituted by a real bishop, in a real parish possessing real jurisdiction and having a real congregation, there is no incongruity in their attempting to say a real Mass in real vestments. That they believe themselves all this we have no reason to doubt, and that they are to a great extent bona fide in their endeavours to put life in the old Establishment is admitted by every one. There are two great dangers which beset them—one is that, content with the externals of religious services, they are apt to live and die in them; and the other is that many who have tendencies to the Catholic Church stop short in their churches.

The Ritualists do a great deal of good in accustoming people's eyes and ears to the Catholic ceremonies and chants. It is a step in the right direc-To bring aesthetic life into bare churches, statues into empty niches, and to put altars in place of communion-tables, is a decided improvement on the carcass churches of the Establishment. can deny this to be a benefit, whether it be warranted or not by the Book of Common Prayer, or the decisions of Privy Councils. There is no doubt that the wrench which severed England from the Church in the sixteenth century, like all other violent rendings, tore away more of what should have been left with profit than was at first intended. There is no doubt also that, in advancing towards a former order of things, people go farther in course of time than they at first intended. It is in the nature of movements of the kind, which are guided by human taste, that they cannot stop at a medium. Old Tractarians found the via media untenable. What, however, is to become of those who die in the

ria media? This is the question which Ritualists should seriously propose to themselves, and as seriously answer.

They will admit two things—that the ancient Church acknowledged a visible head, and that the proper administration of the Sacraments was necessary to the salvation of the faithful. Have the Ritualists both these things in their system? If there be the least doubt as to whether they have or not, it is dangerous to die in such a state, however agreeable it may be to live in it.

Who is the visible head of the Ritualist Church? Is it the Archbishop of Canterbury? He repudiates their ceremonies, and would be the last to ask Sacraments from a Ritualistic minister if he were dying to-morrow. In fact, there is no bishop in the Church of England who gives them even a decent toleration. We hear charge after charge delivered against them, sometimes sideways, and sometimes point-blank in their faces. That the immense mass of English people consider them as Jesuits in disguise, or something worse, we have very good reason to believe from the tones of the daily papers. If the Archbishop of Canterbury looks with suspicion on their celebrations, and if every other bishop follows his example, what is an outsider to judge from? They may claim communion with him, but will their claims be unconditionally allowed? It would require more than a Ritualist's largeness of faith to believe that Dr. Tait is the true ecclesiastical successor of St. Thomas. We venture to say that he does not believe it him-

self. They who think him the visible head of the English Church had better not say so in print, for we believe this is treason, inasmuch as it would have been a burning matter in the days of Henry VIII. Our judges may not be so severe now; but saying that the Archbishop of Canterbury was head of the English Church would once be considered as equivalent to saying that Marshal MacMahon was King of England. And in truth one assertion is just as true If the Archbishop of Canterbury is as the other. head of no Church, only administrator of certain clerical functions under the good pleasure of his Sovereign-as the episcopal office has been defined by Cranmer and others—then he cannot, a fortiori, be the head of the Ritualists; and if they grant him their headship, we question very much whether he would think it a compliment. He, then, neither is nor can be their head unless some extraordinary changes take place, which neither the law nor the modern prophets can foresee.

Is the Pope their head? There are some of them who really think he is. In this way—'The Pope is the actual head of all the Churches in Christendom, or of the Catholic and Universal Church in all its branches. We are a branch of the Universal Church. Therefore the Pope is our head.' This is a very nice syllogism, seems perfectly conformable to all the rules of Aristotle, and yet we must treat it in the rude way of the scholastics by explaining some of it away altogether. The Pope is the head of the Catholic and Universal Church is an article of faith.

The Pope is the head of all the Churches in Christendom is an untruth. There is but one Church, not two or three or seven in the sense of the supremacy. Every branch Church must be in communion with the Pope, and receive jurisdiction from him, before it can belong to the one Church. Is the Church of England such a branch as this? or is the Ritualist portion of it? Alas, we never heard of the bull which was sent from Rome for the consecration of Dr. Tait, nor did his Grace of Canterbury ever acknowledge the Pope's supremacy when he gave a Mr. Harris of Gibraltar clerical jurisdiction over the English sojourning in Rome. There are several bishops in England who have jurisdiction from the Pope: let the Ritualists submit to his Eminence Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, or to any of his suffragans, and then they can claim the Pope as the head of their branch of the Catholic Church. Church and their professions of faith can never make them a branch, except one cut off to wither, until that is done. The branch theory is about the most futile that ever was invented. It looks so specious, and yet is so fallacious. A nice clean syllogism is a good thing to look at; and although it fulfil all the rules of argumentation, it may happen to be very unsound when we examine its objective truth. XIII. would be very glad to add the Ritualists to his fold: but it must be on his conditions, not theirs.

Now about the administration of the Sacraments. If we put baptism aside—which any one can confer validly, even though he be a heretic or an infidel,

provided he uses the matter and form, and has the intention of doing what the Church does-all the other Sacraments require sacerdotal ordination, episcopal consecration, and proper jurisdiction. Have the Anglicans episcopal consecration or the apostolical succession? This question can only be answered unfortunately in the negative; or, by themselves, even with a grave doubt. Barlow, Bishop of Chichester, and Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, are the two links between the old Catholic hierarchy of England and the present Protestant one. The theory acted upon by the Catholic Church, as far as we can judge from facts, is, that Barlow's consecration was doubtful, and that Parker was not consecrated at all. The whole question of the apostolical succession in the Anglican Church hangs upon these two links. It is not our intention to enter more thoroughly into the Nag's-Head business, old diaries, the insufficiency of the form, and all that. Such a subject would require a book of itself, and a big one too. We shall quote a few words from one of the organs of the Ritualists, the Union Review. It says: 'Barlow and Scory were rascals capable of any profanity, even of going through a mock ceremony of consecration; and probably Parker himself would have made light of it, since he did not shrink from intercourse with two such rascals as Barlow and Scory were.'\* According to their own confession, these links were sorry ones, indeed, for thousands of priests to hang their orders on. If Barlow told Henry VIIL

<sup>\*</sup> Union Review, Nov. 1870, quoted in My Clerical Friends, p. 12.

in 1540 that, 'if the king's grace, being supreme head of the Church of England, should elect any layman to be a bishop, without mention made of any orders, he should be as good a bishop as the best in England,'\* we are not to suppose that he changed his opinion in the reign of Elizabeth when she appointed Parker to the see of Canterbury.

If Parker was not consecrated, there are no real orders in the Church of England. The Catholic Church never refused to recognise real orders where they existed, and she does refuse to recognise Anglican orders.

Supposing, then, that Ritualist priests had real orders, that would not suffice for a proper administration of the Sacraments. Jurisdiction is required even for valid absolution; and it would be curious to see a paper in which the Archbishop of Canterbury gave faculties for hearing confession, and if he reserved any cases to himself. The idea is rather new to look for such an authorisation in a Ritualist Church. The thought is awful of men who cannot be sure of their orders, and are certainly deficient in jurisdiction, doing all the functions of a properly ordained and authorised priest, and making people believe in them.

They must be all Popes in their own estimation, and do things as it seems well to them. This may be modern clerical modesty, but it looks very like ancient clerical effrontery. Such things are done and applauded.

<sup>\*</sup> My Clerical Friends, p. 16.

Ritualists who intend to become Catholics give very little trouble. They are well instructed in Catholic theology. It must be hard, of course, for one who believes himself a priest to find himself a mere layman after his reception into the Catholic Church; but such hardships have been endured by many excellent men, and they have afterwards achieved great things by undergoing them in a true spirit. Just as we are writing we hear that Mr. Orby Shipley, so long a conscientious Ritualist, has entered the fold of the Church.

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

## OBJECTORS TO DOCTRINES.

In the résumé given of the various systems of heresy and error from which converts are likely to be made, we may seem to have overlooked a certain class of people, now very numerous, who believe everything the Church teaches, but object to one, two, or three of her doctrines. It is a very common thing to find people of this class. Although the doctrines of the Catholic Church have all the same motive of credence, and are to be received as one body of doctrine—in such wise that he who would admit all but one, and wilfully reject that one, would be a heretic—still those who are accustomed to seek for truth, and adopt as much of it as approves itself to their minds, cannot at once understand this nicety. The motive of faith is that God revealed certain

doctrines, and the criterion of that motive is the infallible authority of the Church. All the defined doctrines of the Church, therefore, are to be received with the same firm adhesion of the mind, whether they approve themselves to our special mode of thought or not. The anathema sit at the end of them leaves no room for picking or choosing. Non-Catholics cannot enter into this way of looking at things; and although answers have been given in the preceding chapters to most of the doctrinal errors, for the sake of some few, we shall advert to them again in a new form.

A large class of well-disposed people commonly object to the cultus Catholics give to the Blessed Virgin. They think, and conscientiously too, that the great honour paid to her detracts in some way from the honour due to her Son. Let us consider first that our Lord, as a dutiful Son, did honour His Blessed Mother, and that we cannot prove our love of Him better than by following His example. The Church has always thought so. Very often controversial writers of a slipshod kind quote the passage of St. John ii. 4, 'Woman, what is to Me and to thee?' or, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee?' as the Protestant version renders the phrase, to make it appear that our Lord considered Mary as no more to Him in His divine capacity than any other woman. Let us see if the words He used bear that meaning. The Greek is, Τὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ σοι, γύναι; The expression, Τὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ σοι, means a separation, a good-bye, or otherwise is an expression of great respect in the Greek language. It is used in the same way in Latin and in many of the Oriental languages.

Anacreon mentions a man giving up fighting, and says:

Τί γὰρ μαχαίσι κάμοι;\*

'What is to battles and me?'

Epictetus addresses a great friend in terms of gratitude:

Τι έμοι και σοι άνθρωπε; άρκει έμοι τὰ έμα κύκα.†

'What is to me and to thee, man? Thou keepest all my evils from me.'

Ovid, in going into exile, addresses his works thus:

' Quid mihi vobiscum est, infelix cura, libelli Ingenio perii qui miser ipse meo.'‡

'What is to me and to you? I, miserable, have lost you, dear books, the offspring of my mind.'

We might add several more instances in which the Ti iµoì καὶ σοί ('What is to me and to thee' literally, or 'What art thou to me,' as some are pleased to translate the phrase) always means a good-bye to some person or thing respected, loved, and honoured. Pilate's wife used the same form of expression, and calls our Lord 'that just man.' The other places in Scripture where the expression is used mean a great reverence towards the person addressed. Now it is well known that the miracle

<sup>\*</sup> Ode XVII.

<sup>†</sup> Aulus Gellius quotes Lib. I. Noctes Attica.

<sup>†</sup> Trist, Lib, IL. Eleg. I.

of Cana in Galilee was the first our Lord performed, which He did at our Lady's request, even though His 'time had not yet come.' He bade her then good-bye, for He began His mission, and ceased to live with her in Nazareth. Others object to the word 'woman.' The Greek word here is γύναι, and in the Syrochaldaic אשה (aisha). We may remark that the Greek word, which is translated by us woman for want of a better, is a term of respect, and that the corresponding Syrochaldaic word was the name of Eve before her fall. Addressing His Mother by the name which Eve bore before she knew sin, when she was spotless, pure, and innocent, does not favour the interpretation of sectaries, but on the contrary favours the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. He addressed her with the same title only once more, and that was on the Cross, when He said, 'Woman, or γύναι, behold thy son.' There was something beautiful and solemn in that word, when He was leaving her here in this bleak world to be comforted by a very poor substitute for Himself. We will admit that the phrase sometimes has a different meaning; but then generally the person addressed is put in the accusative case, as when the highpriest answered Judas, Τὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς; σὰ ὄψει: 'What is that to us? look thou.' Even by itself, in its dative form, if it had that stiff meaning which the enemies of Mary pretend, we would rather believe that the Scriptures were interpolated than that our Lord used it. It is sad to see people attempt to build their faith on the Scriptures, and at the same time know nothing about the languages in which they were written, or the meaning which those languages had to those who spoke them. It is as clear as day that our Lord loved and honoured His Mother, and equally clear that He obeyed her in His first miracle. And when pious writers, in their fervour, say that He obeys her still, and that she commands in heaven, they are nearer the truth than those sorry creatures, who must be the seed of the serpent foretold in Genesis, between whom and Mary enmities were placed from the beginning. could anything so irreverent get into their heads as to imagine that honouring Mary was not the highest way of honouring her Son? Could the Catholic Church and her holiest and best children, who wrought, fought, and died for the honour of Jesus Christ, be mistaken in the honour they paid His Immaculate Mother? Even Mahometans have chapels in honour of Sith-Mariam, or Lady Mary, as they call the Blessed Virgin: what a shame to hear her disowned by those who call themselves Christians!

In fact this matter is too painful for a Catholic to discuss. He loves and honours Mary as the highest of God's creatures, and as his own mother in more ways than one; and he feels more inclined to shoot the man that would disparage her than to spend an argument on so worthless and disgusting a monster. To such depths does heresy descend. Cold, bald, harsh, grudging, freezing Protestantism, how many souls have you blighted?

There are other objections brought forward also, but they are too silly to need more than to mention them in order to despise them. 'Mary is oftener mentioned by Catholics than Jesus.' The Jews often mentioned those they loved, and only mentioned the august name of God once a year. Did that show that they loved God the less? The name of Jesus makes a Catholic take off his hat or bend the knee, as St. Paul tells us should be done; and therefore they utter it as rarely as they can because of the great reverence they have for it. The devils even, St. Paul tells us, reverence the sacred name, because they 'believe and tremble;' but Protestants must have less faith than the devil, for they never pay any external mark of reverence to the sacred name, and are continually uttering it, as if it were the name of their next neighbour.

'The beads I don't like,' quoth another objector. What objection can anybody have to the beads? The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin, which is one of the finest specimens of vocal prayer in the Church, requires beads, blessed and indulgenced also, for its profitable recital. Perhaps, when it is explained, the objection may seem a childish one. As early as the days of the anchorets in the desert, strings of small stones or beads were used for counting the number of prayers each one was charged with, either as a work of penance or an act of devotion. St. Dominic put these into a set form in the twelfth century by a prayer which united the two kinds, mental and vocal, in one. The fifteen mysteries of the Rosary,

which form the subject of mental reflection, are the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity of our Lord, the Presentation in the Temple, and the Finding, when He had been lost three days. These form the five Joyful Mysteries, or those of the first part. The second part, of Sorrowful Mysteries, consists of the Agony in the Garden, the Scourging, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, and the Crucifixion. For the five Glorious Mysteries, or the third part, we have the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Coming of the Holy Ghost, the Assumption of our Lady, and her Coronation in heaven. excellent subjects than those could be proposed to the contemplation of any Christian. The vocal portion of the Rosary consists in reciting one Our Father, and ten Hail Marys at every mystery, finishing the decade with the Doxology. The Our Father was composed by our Lord Himself; the first portion of the Hail Mary by St. Elizabeth and the Angel, the second by the Church. The Our Fathers are like pillars on which this temple of prayer rests, and the Hail Marys are the garlands strung between them. Those who object to repetitions of the self-same words might as well object to our Lord's praver in the Garden of Gethsemani. This devotion is universal in the Catholic Church; from the Pope down to the most illiterate peasant, all can and do say the The Rosary is to the illiterate what the office, with its repetition of psalms, is to the clergy and the laity who choose to recite it.

The doctrine of the Invocation of our Lady goes

with the general doctrine of the Invocation of Saints. The Church has always practised the Invocation of Saints. It began with the holy men and women who prayed for each other in this world, and then extended itself to those holy souls whom we had a firm hope were reigning with Christ in heaven. Our Lord says that our angels see the face of our Father who is in heaven, and St. John saw them offering up the prayers of the Saints before the throne of God. There is no doubt that our prayers are more acceptable in God's presence, when aided by the assistance of the Saints or friends of God, than they would be if they came from ourselves, as instance the case of Job and many others. 'But then the Saints cannot see or hear us.' Who told you that? The Saints see and hear in God everything that is conducive to their beatitude, and which God chooses to reveal to 'I would rather go straight to Jesus Himself.' You may go if you like. The Church does not command any one to worship or invoke a Saint. only defines that it is lawful to do so, if you like. Some like to visit earthly monarchs in company of their friends at Court, and some like to go and see the monarch by themselves. They may go in both ways; but the latter had better go with a friend than with private presumption. We do not know very clearly and perfectly what may be all the occupations of the Saints in Paradise outside the full enjoyment of the vision of God. We do know, however, that they pray and ask favours-not for themselves, since they have all they want-therefore for

us who stand in need of graces, and who have ties of friendship and kindred, perhaps, with souls who enjoy the presence of God.

Indeed one of the chief objects the Church had in view in sanctioning the cultus of Saints is the holding up to us examples which we might follow. We are all, to a certain extent, children; and children must be led by example. In arms, in arts and sciences, in successful industry, the world holds up her heroes to the aspiring young minds; and the lesson-books of our schools, as well as histories, are filled with the praise which admiring generations offer at the base of their statues. The Church takes up this instinct, and gives the lives of her heroes of sanctity. puts before us those who won the martyr's crown, who edified the Church by their deeds of charity, and who left splendid examples of virtue to after generations. The minds of our youth become ennobled by the reading of their legends and histories, a heroic spirit of sanctity is thereby inspired, and glorious examples of virtue in every age are the result. Take away the cultus of the Saints, and you destroy all this. Take away the purity, the simplicity, the delightful maternal concern of our Lady, as shown at the marriage of Cana, and you take away all the laudable incentives that can be proposed for maidens to follow in her footsteps. This cultus fills our monasteries and our convents, and makes the world marvel at the signs of sanctity in the practical working of the Church. O, the glories of Mary are productive of more good than all the logic-chopping

of preachers and controversialists since the beginning of the Christian Church!

' Yes; but then some of your Catholic writers are so exuberant, and so extravagant in their encomiums of the Saints, that they seem to overlook everything else.' Is it not a fact that an enamoured swain is more poetical when talking to and of his lady-love than he is in his ordinary conversation? Dr. Newman somewhere remarks that these exaggerated gushings of supernatural love for our Lady and the Saints can be explained on the same principle. Love-letters are the real sentiments of the writer when he pens them; but when the parties have fallen out, and the letters are read in a case of 'breach of promise,' the lawyers and the outside world laugh at them, and consider them the outpourings of a diseased mind. writings of great Saints about Mary and her glories verge on the poetical, and are to be taken as such. They are not intended for the cold Calvinistic lawyer, or the laughing, irreverent, outside, heretical world. They are meant for hearts which are aglow, like the writer's own, with the greatest and purest of Christian love, the love of a son of Jesus for His Immaculate Mother. Looking at the writings of St. Alphonsus and others in this way they bear a charming interpretation; and any one who does not feel his own heart touched with them must feel that he loves Mary less than he ought, and that his devotion and love require to be rekindled.

### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

# SAME SUBJECT (continued).

'The Infallibility of the Pope is a thing I cannot really consent to,' is another one-horse objection which often comes in the way of a good many. It looks so much like haphazard to confide all our aspirations for heaven, and the doctrines that lead thereto, to the keeping of one single man. No human being would ever think of doing so, if our Lord Jesus Christ had not done it. There has been enough said in these pages to show how necessary it is for the custody of truth that there should be some infallible depositary to whose keeping it is intrusted. It would never do to leave truth to the whims, or even the most cultivated intellects, of private men, nay, or any body of Let us remember that divine truths are above all human faculties combined, and that only a divine protection can keep man from error. Almighty God might appoint an assembly of men, or one, just as He pleased, to be the depositary of this trust. has appointed one is clear. No matter what gifts He may have bestowed on the other Apostles, to Peter, and to Peter alone, He gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and unlimited jurisdiction. To Peter, and to Peter alone, He said 'Thou, being converted, will confirm the brethren; and I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.' To Peter, and to Peter

alone, He said, 'Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.' Writers and speakers may dispute and argue about these texts and their interpretations, and deny and assert, and cavil and quarrel, until they are tired. One grand fact remains, that the Universal Church, from the foundation of Christianity even to the present day, has acknowledged Peter's supremacy, and that that supremacy has descended, in an unbroken line of Pontiffs, to his present Holiness now reigning, Leo XIII. In a former chapter it was advanced that the same confidence, humanly speaking, might be reposed in the Pope which a government places in its chief-justice, or which the Jews acknowledged in the Sanhedrim. We now assert more than that in the dicta of the Pope in his official capacity. a promise, not only of freedom from error, but of a certain positive aid in advancing truth. He is not only free from error himself, but he is to confirm his brethren, and feeding implies more than the keeping of a flock from noxious pastures. Faith, then, tells us that the Pope is infallible in the full extent of that word, as far as his official capacity is concerned. It is true the doctrine was not of faith, de fide as we say, until it was defined at the Vatican Council; but, though not of obligation on the consciences of the faithful, it was always held by the most distinguished theologians, and acknowledged practically by the faithful. Some theologians, notably those of the Gallican school, required certain conditions for its exercise, but admitted the thing itself. No one but a heretic ever appealed from the Pope to a General Council. General Councils cannot be always conveniently held; but the exercise of infallibility may be often needed. The Pope, indeed, seldom exercises the faculty, although he possesses it in all its plenitude. It is difficult to believe from prudential motives; so is every article of the Christian faith. It is a beautiful and consolatory dogma, for now we know distinctly what was meant by the words of Jesus Christ in His commission to St. Peter.

Objections made from isolated cases, such as that of Honorius and one or two more, are not worth much notice. These difficulties have been threshed out by theological flails on both sides, until the chaff and straw of them have completely disappeared. The case may be weak or strong, according to the theological bias of the reader, for or against the matter; but clara non sunt dimittenda propter quadam obscura. Christ conferred the gift. of faith. If some one Pope here or there did not exercise it carefully, there is rather a confirmation of his possession of it even in the fact of the objection. A man cannot abuse what he has not got. The great sophism which seems to blind most objectors to the doctrine of infallibility is the confusing it with impeccability. These are two different things altogether. Not to be capable of sinning, and not to be capable of teaching error, are two distinct things, and have nothing to do with each other, except that he who is chosen to teach God's truth is generally a very holy and a very excellent

man. He need not be, as some Popes were not; but that makes no difference.

'I like everything in the Catholic Church, but I cannot bear to go to confession.' This is a very common objection, and no wonder. It certainly is hard to human nature to kneel down and confess all one's public and hidden sins to a mortal like oneself, and to plead guilty to things which one would rather die than have publicly known. The doctrine of the Church is, however, clear and distinct on the matter. She says that every one who has committed a mortal sin after baptism must confess it, as it is upon the conscience, in order to obtain absolution from an approved priest. This is the condition of its forgiveness. No one is exempt from this law. Popes, bishops, priests, princes, and people must all submit to it. No priest can absolve himself; the priests must confess their sins to one another. Such a universal law allows of no exception save physical or moral impossibility. The confession is not, after all, so difficult as it is supposed to be by those who do not practise it. It is like diving into the water for one's first swim in the season. Very disagreeable for the start, but very pleasant when a while in, and very comfortable in the glow of satisfaction which There is nothing extraordinary in it. follows. is like giving one's confidence to a dear friend, with this difference: that a friend, no matter how dear, may betray you, but a confessor must die before he can do so. The grand preservation of the seal of confession throughout so many ages of the Church,

amid temptations and dangers, would be a thing impossible to expect; but when Jesus Christ instituted confession He cast His supernatural grace over its secrets, and they have never been revealed, and never will be. This must be taken on faith, because it looks so unlikely; but it is proved by ecclesiastical history. When one comes to consider it from another point of view, confession after all is not so hard. We find some difficulty in telling our secret sores and infirmities to a medical man; but we know that if we conceal any serious matter from him he cannot prescribe aright for us, and may injure instead of curing us. It is the same with confession. We lay open the spiritual sores of the soul to a spiritual physician, and if we conceal anything the cure cannot be effected. The interest here concerns the soul and not the body, and is therefore of the greater importance. One other observation. The physician of the body will do his best, but is not certain of curing us; the spiritual physician is certain of curing, provided no obstacle be placed by the penitent in his If it be disagreeable to human nature, notwithstanding all this reasoning, we must remember that it is a part of the Sacrament of Penance, and therefore is not meant to be pleasant. any kind seldom are, especially if the wounds to be cured are deep or of long standing. Some observe that confession is of its nature demoralising. are the most moral among your Catholic neighbours! The man that goes to confession, or the man who does not? You may be almost certain that a Catholic

who does not go to his confession when obliged by the laws of the Church is sure to have something wrong with him, or to be guilty of some habitual fault, which has become a second nature to him, and which he fears the confessor will forbid. From its fruits you may know it before you try it. Make an experiment and see if it will help your immorality. It is very well for people to raise fancy theories concerning matters they know nothing about. It would be far better to know something about the matter, and then to be modest in putting our objections.

'But, then, bad use has sometimes been made of the confessional, as any one can see by reading your theologies and the laws laid down in them.' No good gift of God committed to man's keeping can ever be free from The art of printing and great many other blessings conferred upon the human race cannot escape the same imputation. It is well to know that these abuses are very rare. Men have cut their throats with razors; hung themselves with ropes and handkerchiefs; murdered their wives and offspring. Is that a reason why no one should shave; tie up his luggage; wipe the perspiration off his countenance; marry or beget children? If we argue in this way, we are on the high-road to becoming idiotic or universal sceptics. It is singular how apt we are to stop at silly objections, and feel justified in not doing what our reason and faith dictate to us. when the matter concerned is other than agreeable to our nature. If the Church prescribed high feeding and the drinking of choice wines, and luxurious baths, no one would refuse to accept them, although people have sometimes been choked whilst eating, others have died in the horrors of drink, and others have lost their lives in the sea. In fact, no one could go to sea or travel in a railway-train on this principle. It proves too much, and therefore proves nothing.

'There is a new doctrine which has crept into the Church within these few years, and I don't like it. That is the doctrine about devotion to the Sacred Heart.' A good many are found who object to this doctrine for no other reason than that it is new. Every one must see that it is a sweet devotion. It brings us near to the human dispositions of our Lord, and makes us find in Him something besides the bare stern facts of His being our Creator and Redeemer. It has spread with great rapidity in the Church, and has been sanctioned by the Holy See; therefore it has a prima facie claim upon our respect and acceptance. At the same time, like the Invocation of Saints, no one is obliged to practise it who does not like.

To understand the nature of this devotion it is well to remark that for many ages the conflicts of theologians about matters of doctrine, heretical or unsound, made what we call devotion, or the prompt will of giving ourselves to things of God, a rather dry and sapless business. The intellect was convinced, and the will moved to perform the ordinary duties of a Christian life; but a want was felt to exist somewhere. Saints arose who paid attention to this matter, and theologians themselves, like Contenson,

thought it well to infuse some heartfelt feelings of devotion into the study of the higher science of salvation. They found a great many attractions to devout souls in the mysteries of our Lord's Sacred Humanity, and that the indulging of these attractions brought people nearer to His Divinity, and made them more feelingly pure and perfect in their daily St. Paul of the Cross called men to repentance and change of life by describing the affecting scenes of the Passion of our Redeemer; and St. Alphonsus and other missionaries of that periodthe eighteenth century-did the same. The Sacred Heart of our Lord, as representing the tender feelings of His Sacred Humanity-a something higher than His mere material body-drew at once a kindly response from those who meditated upon it. All that remained was to examine the doctrine, and see if it were consistent with the doctrine of the Incarnation; and being found so, the Church at once encouraged Devotion to the Sacred Heart, then, is but meditation on the human love of our Divine Lord, which was far sweeter to us than His divine love; for if He had only human love He would save us all, and His divine love must permit some to be lost; and as such it possesses a peculiar sweetness, and a very high claim on us to love Him with our whole heart. It is needless to expand this theory further than by saying that a cold heartless theology scarcely succeeds in making any one righteous. One may see things, or believe things, and approve of things; but if the heart is wanting, the moving of the lips will

not avail. 'Not every one that sayeth to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of My Father who is in heaven.' To do that will in a manner acceptable to Heaven our heart must be in our work; our heart being in it we shall do it cheerfully, and 'God loveth the cheerful giver' of his actions as well as of his substance.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### OBJECTORS TO DISCIPLINE.

MATTERS of discipline are those things which are not essential to the Church's existence, but which she has adopted as her own, and which she has consecrated by years of approval and practice, and which, although she could change if she chose, she has no intention of modifying except under very peculiar circumstances. The objectors to such matters may, then, know at the outset that although the Church may and can change them, she has no idea of doing so for individuals or even for countries, unless under grave pressure.

'Why say Mass in Latin, a language which the people cannot understand?' This objection has been made many times in many ages of the Church. She must have had good reasons, therefore, for holding out her custom, notwithstanding the advantages which could seemingly be gained by a change in it.

The liturgy of the Church is very ancient, dating back to apostolic times. St. James the Apostle is supposed to have composed the first Canon of the Mass, and other Apostles and Popes have added to it until it has come down to us in its present form. The first liturgy was Syrochaldaic, the second was Greek, and the third Latin. These three liturgies are still preserved, with a few more which were composed in later times, like the Mozarabic and Coptic; perhaps the Armenian might be numbered also. All the rites which have an ancient liturgy, whether united to the See of Peter or not, preserve it most religiously and carefully. The Eastern rites, differing from each other in language and ceremonies, are unintelligible to the people who hear them, and bear scarcely as close an affinity to the spoken language of the people as the Latin does to the languages formed from it, such as French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, &c. To ask, then, why the Latin rite keeps the Latin language is the same as to ask why all the ancient rites, whether schismatical or not, keep theirs. There is one reason for all rites, and some others over and above for Latin.

Any one who understands that the Mass is a sacrifice will see the meaning of those beautiful rites at once. A sacrifice is an act, not a preachment. It is a great act, in which the Son of God is offered mystically to His Eternal Father, as He was really on Calvary for the sins of the human race. If any number of Christians stood at the foot of the Cross on Mount Calvary, as the Eternal Son of God was

slowly dying under the torments of the Crucifixion, how would they worship? Is it by preaching or vociferating? No, that would be an irreverent mockery. No, they would worship in silence; and the only audible thing in that crowd would be the sigh of compunction and the beating of the breast, which were the only sounds heard on Calvary-for some went down beating their breasts, saying, 'Of a truth this was the Son of God'-except the voices of the mockers. How beautifully representative is the Sacrifice of the Mass! When the great moment is coming, everything is silent but the little bell which gives notice of the approaching event. All are hushed in the deepest reverence. Each silent adorer sends forth his or her silent prayers through the Lamb sacrificed for our salvation, and bow in awe and reverence as the Sacred Host is elevated for our adoration. One may be praying for compunction; another for grace to overcome temptation; another may be recommending to mercy the soul of a departed friend; another may ask for the protection of Heaven in a voyage about to be undertaken; another may think of a son in the battle-field or upon the ocean; another may recommend the sick or the helpless; another may sigh under the pressure of temporal difficulties; another under the weight of misfortune or poverty. Who can tell what the diverse necessities of an assembled multitude may be at that awful moment, and would it not be the height of profanity to disturb their devotion? Those who speak at that moment or speak against

it always remind one of those who passed by the Cross and wagged their heads in derision at the Victim who was immolated for the sins of men. Those who consider worship to consist in vociferation and loud talking cannot understand the sublimity and beauty of the Mass. Empty sounds are a poor substitute for the depths of the heart, which find an outflow in the silent adoration of the Host. Since the greater part of the Mass is said in silence (broken here and there by a few solemn words, like the Three Hours' Agony, in which our Lord spoke but seven times, and the three assistants never spoke at all) it matters little in what language it is The language may be a living or a dead one, The action is what people it makes no difference. assist at, not the words. Those who wish for the words can have them in their prayer-books and Missals, and read them if they cannot contemplate; but the need of words is unknown by the devout, who have their own intentions and prayers to attend to.

'But then,' our objector proceeds to say, 'the parts of the Mass which are said aloud might be in the vernacular.' They might be; but they are not, because the priest does not say them aloud for preaching purposes, but as parts of an action, and he hurries through them until he comes to the central and consequent portions of the Sacrifice. When he wishes to preach, he reads the Epistle and Gospel in the vernacular; and when he does not, those who can read may look at their books, and those who cannot

may tell their beads. It is necessary to get out of a non-Catholic's head the idea that the Mass is not a preaching business. They are accustomed to a pulpit and a preacher, instead of a priest and a sacrifice.

There is another advantage obtained by having the Mass always in the same language and performed with the same ceremonies. No matter in what part of the world a Catholic may find himself, although he speak not a word of the language and understand not a custom or a habit of the natives, he can always feel at home in the church, where he hears the same sounds from the altar, and sees the same mysteries gone through in the manner he has been accustomed to from his youth. A universal or Catholic Church requires a universal liturgy. sects may content themselves with vernaculars; but the Church of all ages has wisely kept the language of the scholars of all ages, a language which even the most ignorant can partially understand by being habituated to hear it from their youth. Not that ignorant Catholics can understand Latin; but they understand the phrases said aloud in the Mass, and know what part of the Mass is going on if they hear the Dominus vobiscum or the Sanctus. The Domine non sum dignus and the tinkle of the little bell is the sign for communion. All these phrases are as dear to them as their own hearts; and when they hear them in a foreign land they seem for the moment to be kneeling in the little parish church, where they were first present at the august Sacrifice of the altar.

Latin is the ecclesiastical language. It suits all our purposes most admirably. When students come from foreign nations to pursue their studies and acquire the knowledge, first of philosophy, and then of theology, which qualifies them to be teachers in their own country, they can do so in any Catholic college in any part of the world. Latin is the language of our schools; in Latin all our academical works are written, in Latin we hold our disputations The works of heretics are often transand theses. lated into Latin that we may understand what is in The same books do for all the them to be refuted. world, and the masters may be picked from any nation or any clime. There is thus a universal spirit of brotherhood fostered, and a traditional terminology adopted for the communication of knowledge between us. A Catholic priest is quite at home in China or Japan, just as he is in South America or Africa. His papers are in Latin, the local priest or bishop knows Latin. They can both converse in that language, and it is a convenience for instruction in the native tongues if need be. Thus is the bond of unity fostered and preserved in all, outside the domain of faith, by the use of one beautiful and elegant language, which is par excellence the language of the learned, and which, though dead as a vernacular, lives in the Catholic Church, and is taught in universities.

It may be added that a liturgy in the vernacular would be a very serious inconvenience to Catholics. Suppose a priest went from England to Germany

and did not understand German, what was he to do. He could not say Mass. He would have to bring his Missal and his server with him, and the good Germans who knelt at the altar would not know what he was about.

Find as many reasons as these to converge for the continuation of any one single thing, and you may understand why the Church will not change the language of her liturgy, although she could if she chose.

'Then there is Communion in one kind.' been one of the most ancient customs introduced by ecclesiastical authority. Nothing is more certain than that Communion was first given in both kinds, and that this practice was continued for some time in the Church. The Communion may have been given by our Lord in one kind, on the journey to Emmaus, after His Resurrection, but it is not quite certain. What is quite certain is that, the Real Presence being once admitted as an article of faith, Communion in one kind or other, either under the appearance of bread or wine, is equally satisfactory of the divine precept, 'Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you,' since, according to the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the Body and the Blood are under both species. Jesus Christ is present in the Blessed Sacrament as a living man, and the mystical death or separation is only in the separate consecration. The species of wine are less capable of conservation than the species of bread, and hence

the Church chose to keep the latter instead of the former in the tabernacle. Irreverences are also avoided by the refusal of the cup; and since that is necessary only for the mystical sacrifice, the Church has wisely dispensed with it in the communion of the sick and the hale also.

There is another objection sometimes made, viz. offerings for Masses. The faithful give the priest an offering to say Mass either for the living or the dead, as the case may be; and some consider this as simony. Now let people set their minds on something else, if they want to find fault with Catholic customs. Is it a wrong thing to give the poor priest an alms-offering, which he may need very badly, if he offers his prayers in the Sacrifice, or the fruits of that Sacrifice, for the good of your soul or the souls of your friends? Certainly not. 'He that ministers at the altar should live by the altar.' The Church has guarded this offering with her wise laws, so that, through cupidity or any kindred vice, it may not degenerate into simony. It has always been the custom that a priest who offers the holy Sacrifice for the intention of one person instead of another should get some reward for making the preference. often does so, indeed, without any reward, and many a secret prayer he offers for stray sheep who never think of themselves. Is it not meet that when these prayers are asked some recognition should follow? It is a sign of faith and gratitude.

There are others who object to the ceremonies of the Mass. 'Why so many bowings and genuflexions?

Why so much swinging of censers?' To put one's mind at ease with regard to ceremonies, it is only necessary to remember that God Himself prescribed ceremonies for the sacrifices of the Jews, ay even the measure, form, and material of the vestments. If we have not these formal matters laid out in the New Testament, it is because they were left to the judgment of the Apostles and their successors to arrange, according to peculiarities of times and places. Hence we have a great diversity in ceremonies. There are various rites among the Orientals-some poetical and splendid in their ormaments, and some meagre and ordinary. In the West itself we have a great variety. The rites of the Western Church were brought to a uniformity by the Council of Trent, and only those retained their peculiar rites who had had them two hundred years before. Some religious orders and special dioceses retain their old rites yet; but most have come into the uniform Roman rite. The whole reason of rites and ceremonies is to give splendour and something of an imposing nature to the great Sacrifice of the new law. reason of course suits itself to times, places, and circumstances.

We sometimes hear objections made from the rubrics of the Mass about accidents which may happen to the elements or species. One answer can be given to all these. The care and concern and rules all spring from a belief in the Real Presence and from care to avoid irreverence.

#### CHAPTER XL.

# SAME SUBJECT (continued).

'The Church has always been the enemy of free discussion, and she wants too much submission from human reason.' Before replying to this very sweeping charge, so often and so flippantly made in books, papers, pamphlets, and the like, let us ask in what Church are the most learned men to be found. But for the Catholic Church where would learning be? Why even the more respectable of the heresies were invented by educated Catholics. No Protestant had ever genius enough to invent a heresy, of any kind of plausible logical consistency. The greatest astronomers, geologists, physicians, linguists, theologians, and philosophers which the world has ever seen were Catho-Even at the present day some of the most devout priests excel in all the arts and sciences. Church be the enemy of free thought, this could hardly be the case. The Church is the enemy of free thought run riot. She is the enemy of those who, making some small discoveries in reptiles or snakes, or perchance in a higher order of existence, think they can forthwith account for all the phenomena of nature, and put an external omnipotent Being aside. smites with all her power such froward geniuses, and bids them come to her footstool to learn humility—a thing they very seldom do, for they have a notion of being superior to all men, because they have made

a discovery in steam or electricity. She never has emancipated philosophy from her guardianship, and she allows very free latitude in the discussion of all its questions, unless philosophers, ascending from their experimental studies, try to touch some of her sacred laws or doctrines; then she interferes.

This is exactly what our objector condemns. Index Expurgatorius has got more abuse than any other arm of the Catholic discipline, except perchance the It is the chief duty of the pastor of the Inquisition. faithful to see that noxious books be not put into the hands of the simple and uneducated. How are they to distinguish what is noxious from what is not? Every one is not gifted with the power of discrimination between truth and insidious falsehood. therefore of the utmost importance that a tribunal should be formed, composed of learned men, who will compare every work issued from the press with the Catholic standard of received truth, and note its character, so as to warn the faithful against it. one conversant with human nature must be aware of the baneful effect of allowing the young and half educated to read everything that comes in their way. One is apt, whilst reading a well-written book, to cast himself, for the time being, into the author's way of thinking, and thus perhaps, in many cases, take in a poison which can scarcely ever be eradicated. Index marks a work with any note of censure, the reader will be on his guard, and will not swallow everything as true which the author asserts. consequently a very wholesome and useful institution. Its laws are rather strict, and the spiritual penalties attached to their violation very severe; but no lawgiver can make his decisions bind except there be a penalty attached. Permissive legislation has always been a failure. Then men who are well enough instructed, such as priests, masters of arts, and others, can easily obtain leave to read any manner of forbidden books, provided they be not professedly obscene. Where, then, is the grievance of the Index?

'Then there is that terrible Inquisition.' The Inquisition was founded upon very sound principles. was founded on the principle that man was as much bound by a contract made to God as he was by a contract made to a fellow-man. If a man promised to obey God according to the teachings of the Church, and afterwards began to teach blasphemies or disobedience to both, the Inquisition considered him as worse than a man guilty of high treason, and dealt with him accordingly. There is nothing wrong in this principle; and if the Inquisition had tried its power on Luther, Calvin, and others, we should not have had so many souls lost through their false teaching. The mode in which the laws of the Inquisition were carried out in Spain was certainly barbarous, and worthy of the age of pagan persecution; but the Roman Inquisition was always mild, and its object was rather to protect the weak and ignorant from error than to punish the author. We have nothing to say as to how a thing may be carried out, nor is it needful or right to defend abuses; all that is necessary to remark is that the Inquisition was a very good institution, and that it did good work in its day. Its day was a day of harshness. It was a day in which societies did not exist for the prevention of cruelty to animals. It was a day in which people believed in penances and corporal austerities; and that any one who was led into the violation of any human or divine law was led thereto by some passion of the body, and therefore that his body should suf-It was the day of stocks, of ducking-stools, of pillories, of piercing of ears, tongues, and branding of foreheads. That the criminal law carried out such tortures is a fact; and it is a question, which has not fairly been solved yet, whether a few hours in the stocks or a few minutes in the pillory would not have a more deterrent effect upon evil-doers than the genteel confinement of a modern prison or the less troublesome penalty of forty shillings and costs.

'To abstain from flesh-meat on certain days of the year, and to fast on others, is rather hard, and injurious to health.' There is not the least doubt of it; and the Church in appointing her days of fast and abstinence never meant that they should be a pleasant exercise, or that they should cause us to thrive corporally. Abstinence is, after all, a very healthy thing sometimes; and so is fasting also. Abstinence from drink is the best and healthiest cure for the drunkard, and fasting is equally salutary for the glutton. The fasts of the Church are meant medicinally. Her abstinence on all Fridays is instituted to commemorate our Saviour's passion and death; and her other days of

fasting and abstinence are intended for a penitential exercise on the part of her children. Our Lord Himself foretold that when He would be taken away the Apostles and their successors would fast; and He tells us, moreover, that there are some devils which can only be cast out by fasting and prayer. There is, therefore, some efficacy in fasting if it can help to cast out a devil, or the devil's work, which is sin. Every religious system has something of a restraint in the way of food and drink, since these two are generally the incentives to sins by excess. The ancient Christians would smile at the mildness of our modern Lents; but the Church can change the laws of fasting, and does so as she thinks fit.

' The celibacy of the clergy is a thing I cannot believe in.' What business is it of anybody else whether a certain gentleman chooses to live in single blessedness rather than be burdened with a wife and children? How can that choice on his part interfere with the spiritual or temporal digestion of his neighbour? Some people are fond of taking an interest in the welfare of others, which those others resent, and justly, as an impertinence. Of such a nature was the interest which the late Mr. Whalley and Mr. Newdegate took in the inspection of convents to see if any lady enclosed there wished to get out, evidently not being aware that any young lady who wishes can walk out of a convent in these kingdoms whenever she pleases, and that a good many do so from time to time. Such persons as these would like to see priests, perhaps, taking to wives and omitting sick-calls lest they might bring an infection home to their children; or they would like to see them attached to a house and family, so as to be less free to go on foreign missions at the bidding of their superiors. They would have them become like the modern Greek or Anglican married clergy, to whom nobody would go to confession for fear that their sins might be told to the gentlemen's wives. The Church has always preferred celibacy in her clergy, and she wants no one in her ministry who will not take upon him this obligation.

'That is very well,' some one will remark, 'when people are young and unacquainted with the world; but if they regret this step in after life, should they not be allowed to change their minds?' People often change their minds after they get married also; and is that a reason why they should be at liberty to put away their wives or cut off their heads, after the manner of Henry VIII., and take new ones in their place?

There is one solid answer to all this cavilling, and it answers the nature of vows also—premising that it is better not to take a vow than, having taken one, not to keep it—and that is, that at the moment of taking a vow or entering upon a life of celibacy the young priest, monk, or nun, feels that God deserves to be loved with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our strength, and all our mind. We know that there can come no time in future in which God deserves to be loved less than at this present moment of vow-making or consecration. There may be a time when we shall feel less fervent; but God

is still the same. Would it be considered generous in a bride to promise to love her husband only as long as she felt the same passion for him which she had at the foot of the altar? Decidedly not. Neither would it be fair or generous to treat God with less devotion than we ought to treat an earthly spouse. The confirmation of the will in good is the whole aim of a vow, and the moral obligation contracted by it is a barrier raised up by ourselves against any dallying with temptations to its contrary. There is, then, only a moral obligation. Nothing prevents a priest or other consecrated person from going into the world and wiving himself if he so chooses except this moral obligation. If he respects that, he is worthy of the esteem of God and man; if he does not, he is worthy neither of the one nor of the other.

This whole matter of chastity has been referred to already, and it is only remarkable how those outside the fold admire it in their own few devout people and cannot admire it in Catholics. Perhaps the truth is that they do admire it, and cannot help being annoyed at the fact that a Church they condemn as the mistress of all superstitions should, in every age of the world, and in the present as well as the past, show continually such splendid examples of self-denial, of purity and chastity. So beastly are the minds of some writers that they think it is impossible for people to keep chaste. Some drunkards think it is impossible for people to keep sober, and when they do get sober occasionally they admire the abstainers. If Protestant writers who denounce celi-

bacy would try to keep chaste for a few months, and give their undivided attention to God, perhaps they might be as well able to judge of chastity as a drunken man when out of his cups can of sobriety. It is a slight test, but one that ought to be tried before people say it is impossible, and impute ignoble and degrading sins to those whose lives are a satire on their own. The youthful training, the examples of the Saints, the influence of the confessional, cause a love of chastity to grow up in young minds; and they find their greatest happiness in this world in offering themselves to God when the time comes, and having no other lover but Him for time and eternity. It would be a very wrong thing to discourage such pure-mindedness by suggesting a lower standard of holiness.

Why does the Church condemn Free-' Freemasonry. The Church is very wise, and has in her masonry? councils the wisest, the most learned, and the most disinterested men this world can afford, and vet she has from the very beginning condemned all manner of secret societies. Outsiders cannot see her reasons, and though we see a good many of them it is not always expedient to mention them. When the world sees members of secret and socialistic societies attempting to assassinate kings, emperors, and statesmen, it stands aghast, and makes coercive laws in its moments of indignation. If the Church's advice were followed such societies could not exist. It is much easier to prevent their existence than to crush them when they have once got a foothold in a state. But, then, Freemasonry is not of that wicked nature.' How do you know? O, the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family, peers, and nobles, are Freemasons. They are not bad. Certainly not; but they know as much about the higher grades of Masonry as a convent schoolgirl. The Church knows more about it than they do, and if her warning be not listened to she has nothing to blame herself for. No Catholic can be a Freemason unless he be lost to all sense of honour. The word of a Catholic who is a Freemason is not worth the oath of a perjured costermonger. Let no one trust a man who pretends to be attached to a Church and violates one of her most distinct and determined laws.

# CHAPTER XLI.

#### THE THRESHOLD.

What has to be done before a convert is received into the Church is here designated as the Threshold. There are so many minor and apparently unimportant matters to be looked to that it is difficult to group their nature under any other heading.

A convert presenting himself for instruction is generally one whom God has moved to the step, in some way peculiarly His own, and suited to the state or profession of the applicant. There is no defining what this peculiar way may be, or what particular phase of error has to be encountered. Nearly all who apply have the wish of Solomon in their hearts: 'Dabis ergo servo two cor docile,'—'Thou wilt give therefore to Thy servant a teachable heart' (3 Kings iii. 9); and they are prepared to accept instruction in the Catholic faith, if it be given judiciously and in a manner suitable to their capacity. Some are great scholars and have read the Bible and the Fathers, have perchance officiated as priests in Anglicanism; some may be moved by a passing wish to fill up an indefinable yearning; and some may have no notion at all about positive religion.

The priest must first gauge, as well as he can, what the spiritual state of the soul is, what are his positive tenets, and what are the points in Catholic belief to which he conscientiously objects. Having found out the first and second, and settled the third in a manner satisfactory to the catechumen, as we shall call him, the work of positive instruction may begin.

It is no harm to remark that, before entering upon the positive instruction, it is well to find out all the objections and antipathies which early education and prejudice may have planted in a catechumen's mind. They who come to be received will not tell them all at once; they are afraid to offend the priest by the bad notions they have imbibed concerning himself and his class; they are afraid of seeming impertinent and even impudent, and therefore keep back many things which afterwards come out and destroy perhaps the whole work of conversion. To

encounter this difficulty, so commonly to be met with in human nature, a priest must speak kindly, gently, and sympathetically. He must not begin to run down Luther, Henry VIII., and all the Reformers, and call them unbecoming names. must remember that these men are handed down in little histories as heroes of sanctity, and the worst thing a man can do is to tumble down at once an idol of another's admiration. Let the Reformers be, at the outset. Time will bring its light on them. It is a great thing to gain new converts' confidence. Let them see by your charity and gentleness that you have no other idea at heart than their eternal welfare. They may possibly have been moved to the step by one of your discourses. Do not show any vanity on the occasion, but just say that every priest might say the same, and perhaps better than yourself. Let your words and conversation, in treating with applicants for admission into the Church, be suggested by simple charity. Many are driven away, after coming to the threshold of the faith, by an exhibition of the imperfections which they expect to lay aside for ever on their entrance into the fold. Patience, too, is required. When once you have gained the confidence of intended converts, every reserve is flung aside. They come out with objections, and think themselves smart by the good strong way in which they put them. Take this quietly and give a gentle retort, which will completely pulverise their impudence. A retort is not an argument, but very often it is more potent with a certain class of persons. At all events, following your own good judgment, see that all objections are removed before you begin your positive instruction.

In positive instruction the best thing is to give converts the Child's Catechism. It is from it we have all learnt our religion, and it has the essence of all those things we are obliged to believe. Let them read it over carefully at home and come to you when they have any difficulty, to get it explained. If your duties are too onerous this office of explaining the meaning of the Catechism can be delegated to Christian Brothers for men, or nuns for The schoolmaster or mistress or any wellwomen. instructed Catholic will do as well. Some give books, such as the Poor Man's Catechism and Hay's Sincere Christian; but as a rule, when converts have got to this point, books are generally a trouble, and sometimes they cannot understand them. comes by hearing;' and let all the explanations requisite be given viva roce, either by yourself or somebody suited to the condition of the inquirer. Let a convert learn, as soon as may be, that the Catholic Church teaches by the voice and not by books, and try to accustom him to this practice. It is a good method of doing away with that divine credence in private judgment-fancy the private judgment of a washerwoman!-which is fostered by sects who take their Bibles and make their faith, such as it is, out of them on principle. Give them a notion of a living and speaking authority; and when they compare notes with their neighbours, especially

if they be Catholics, and find that all are agreed on the same subjects, the spark of faith enkindled in them takes new strength and is increased by additional fuel.

Some priests are puzzled as to the time which ought to be spent in preparing a convert for reception. There are two very praiseworthy opinions on this subject. Many priests think that it is better to keep converts a long time in probation, waiting until they are thoroughly conversant with the whole Catholic system, and acquainted with all the minor details of its ceremonial and liturgy. Others think that it is enough for them to believe the essentials, and that instruction in the secondary things can well come afterwards. Both are reasonable in their way, and one cannot interfere with preconceived notions on such subjects. We think, however, that a middle way would be of more utility. a convert knows the essentials, and that all the minor things to which he may object have been settled in conversation. If you see, then, that one is disposed to be a Catholic and knows enough, you have no right to refuse him or defer his reception of the Sacraments, not knowing but death may interfere to frustrate the completion of your instructions. It is a very difficult point to decide when one is exactly prepared for the ceremony of admission into the Church.

There are two or three things to be observed here. If an applicant for admission into the Church is a young man or a young woman who wants to marry a Catholic, the difficulty is very great. once heard of a priest who could never make a girl belonging to his parish learn her Catechism. 'He tried each art, improved each dull delay, allured to brighter worlds,' but, contrary to the poet's aphorism, failed 'to lead the way.' This wooden parishioner of his came to be married, and the priest refused to tie the nuptial knot unless she learnt her Catechism. She set to work, and in one night got every bit of it off to memory, and did not miss a question the next morning. Matrimony is a great incentive sometimes, and many young people will go through the process of instruction and learn things off for matrimony which they put aside or forget immediately after. The motives of such people in entering the Church are very dubious. not to be rejected, for sometimes they turn out very well; but it would be a wise thing to delay them as long as possible, and to try their devotion to the Church in various ways. If marriage is found to be their only motive, it is a bad sign.

As soon as deep rooted prejudices have been removed it is well to lay aside controversy altogether, and get a convert simply to learn as a child would. Some may have a fair knowledge of the Catholic religion already, but then they have it from a different source. It is one thing to pick up Catholic doctrines by reading or study, and another thing to receive them upon authority. Private judgment is to be exercised to a certain point, and when real instruction begins it is to be laid aside. When one

submits to the authority of the Church, he does not submit to the private judgments of the collective body which forms a general council, or to the private judgment of the Pope. He submits to their judgment plus the divine assistance of the Holy Ghost, which is promised to be with them and to guide their decisions. This is to be well explained; and then the priest, or another instructor appointed by him, speaks as the mouthpiece of the celestial doctrine defined by the Church, and not as a private individual. When a convert once sees this and recognises its reasonableness, there is no more ado but to learn at leisure as much Catholic doctrine as is requisite for reception into the Church. accomplished in a longer or shorter time, according to the capacity of the learner.

Be careful to clear away all the difficulties, and ask again and again if there be any others before the process of positive instruction begins. The minimum of what a convert requires to know explicitly is the following: 'That there is one God only, and that He rewards the good and punishes evil; the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity, and the Incarnation and Death of our Lord. He must know in substance at least, and believe with explicit faith, the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father, and Hail Mary; the Ten Commandments, and the Commandments of the Church; and the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Penance, and any other Sacrament (e.g. Confirmation) which he wishes to receive at the time.'\*

<sup>\*</sup> St. Alphonsus, Istruzzione per gli Confessori, iv. 3, p. 1.

In cases of great necessity, such as the imminent danger of death, the five essential things will do, together with an implicit faith in all that the Church teaches.

It is understood that we do not confine ourselves to those elementary truths, but this much at least is required.

When a convert believes all this and whatever articles are proposed on the authority of the Church, a priest can safely proceed to the reception itself; but before doing so he must consider three things.

The people from whom converts come may be divided into three classes: 1. Pagans; 2. Material heretics; 3. Formal heretics.

- 1. Pagans may be divided into two classes: those who believe nothing of the Christian religion, and those who believe something of it. Under the former may be ranked Hindoos, Chinese, and other heathens; under the latter Mahometans, Jews, Quakers, and all unbaptised Christians, as they are called.
- 2. Material heretics are those who have learnt heretical doctrines by being brought amongst heretics, whether born of them or not, and who grow up with horrid notions about everything Catholic, insomuch as to have a positive antipathy to learning anything about them. Some of those—indeed, a very great number—are in good faith, and never had a doubt about their own state of belief not being sufficient for salvation. Some have had doubts, but did not take the trouble to clear them up, either because they were too much occupied in worldly

matters or because religious topics became irksome to them on account of the jarring and conflicting opinions which they have heard from the lips of their neighbours.

3. Formal heretics are those who have apostatised from Catholicity in any one error against faith, or those who have professed heresy and taught it knowingly, or at least with doubts that it might be such.

For each of these classes there are different ceremonies. These shall be detailed in the next chapter.

Before entering upon any ceremony of reception let the priest explain the nature of contrition or sorrow for sin. How it is that no sin can be forgiven by any power, divine or human, without sorrow. Let motives be suggested, and the catechumen fully instructed in the nature and consequences of sin, in order that nothing be wanting to a real reconciliation with God. Let formal heretics be taught, moreover, how the horrid sin of heresy or schism is of the worst kind of malice, and how they have to repent, not only of their personal sins in falling away from the faith, but of the scandal they have given to the Church, and others whom they have indoctrinated with their errors. These matters being premised. we now proceed to the mode of reception.

### CHAPTER XLII.

### MODES OF RECEPTION.

# 1. The Unbaptised.

BEFORE receiving an unbaptised person into the Church he has to be instructed in the rudiments of the faith, and according to the kind of belief or unbelief he comes from, in those points of Christian morality which he is required to practise. The old rituals and the customs of the Church require that a person be kept a long time in the class of catechumens, making exception for danger of death and the like; but the modern practice is to receive them as soon as they are fairly instructed and show a disposition to learn the Catholic practices diligently. The convenience of books does away with a good deal of the old oral instruction; but, as was remarked before, it is better to instruct catechumens orally in order that faith may come by hearing and not by This seems a small matter in itself, but it is of great importance when we have to treat with a generation given to read and judge of all things on the strength of their individual capacities.

An unbaptised person may have learnt and believed in any number of heresies, but never can incur a censure, because baptism is required for that. There is, therefore, no absolution of any kind required, either in foro interno or externo. Sometimes they wish to go to confession, more for the ease of

their conscience than anything else; and it is sometimes well to allow them to do so, because they may be in the occasions of sin, or have restitution of character or property to make. These impediments they will acknowledge in the confessional, though they might have a difficulty in doing so outside it. If matters of this nature can be arranged without going to the confessional, so much the better; but if they cannot, it is well to allow a rough-and-ready kind of confession after their own way. They must be taught, however, that a confession of this kind is not sacramental, lest they may have scruples afterwards for not having gone through it properly. Instructions can be given them also in confession, or its semblance, more conveniently than outside; and on the whole it seems allowable, and good theologians recommend it-of course, this supposes their wishing it; we may suggest it simply, as it cannot be exacted.

. As the long form of baptising adults is very troublesome, in America, Ireland, and England priests get leave to use the short form of Infant Baptism instead. When this is done it would be well to remember that, as the long form requires a special renunciation of the sect or system of error from which the convert comes, and as the short one makes no mention of the like, it would be well before administering baptism to have a definite renunciation of former errors from the converts' own lips. It is not required that they should recite any other creed than the Apostles' Creed, still it would be well

to get them to profess in words a belief in all that the Church teaches authoritatively, and to profess openly any dogma they may have formerly controverted. This is evident from the necessity there is in entering upon a new life, if only as an evidence of contrition for the past, that those who do so should promise to lay aside all their errors as well as bad habits of sin; for, indeed, errors are bad habits under another form. These things being premised, the convert may be baptised according to the rules and ceremonies laid down in the ritual.

### 2. Baptised Converts.

There are many who seek admission into the Catholic Church and are already baptised. Apostates, for instance, Greek schismatics, and some of the Anglican communion, of whose baptism one can be certain. Some think that Baptists who have undergone their baptism are really baptised; but others, again, doubt it on account of the time which is sometimes allowed to clapse between the matter and form. The Catholic Church admits three ways of baptising: by immersion, by pouring on (effusion), and by sprink-The first method was very much used in the early Church, and comes nearest to the meaning of the Greek word Barrico, and is still in use in some Churches where the custom has remained. The second method is that usually adopted and now given in our Rituals. The last method is only allowed in case of necessity, when a great multitude demand the

Sacrament and the priest cannot possibly reach each one individually. No matter which of the three ways is used: if the water flows upon the person being baptised, and if the form, I baptise thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, has been used with the intention of doing what the Church does, the Sacrament is conferred. The person performing the rite need not be a priest or deacon-or even a Christian, for that matter. When it is certain that a candidate for admission to the Church has been baptised there is nothing to be done except to hear the confession, and if disposed give the absolution from censures. may be done in the confessional, unless the bishop orders otherwise, or unless there be reasons to have it done solemnly and in public.

These reasons are various. Suppose a person has apostatised and drawn others after him, it is well that he should publicly recant his errors, and thereby give satisfaction for the scandal he has been guilty of to the people. We have known apostates to return home to their native parish, in order to be reconciled to the Church, and thereby repair the scandal they had given.

Again, it may be well to set a good example to the people, or to edify them, by seeing some great enemy of the Church taken into her fold; and a conversion of this kind is often better than a sermon.

However, as matters of this description often get into newspapers, and are thus made public enough, it is a subject of prudence whether this publication does not satisfy all the ends of a public and formal reception. The Ritual lays down the form as to be carried out in the church; but it does not say whether any need be present except the parties concerned.

In cases of baptised converts, as confession is always required, on returning to the church, let the priest be sure that he has faculties for absolving from the excommunication incurred by apostasy. theologians are of opinion that many formal heretics even do not incur this excommunication; and as cases are reserved to the Pope, primarily propter censuram, if the censure be not incurred any priest can absolve. However it is better to make sure; for even though this opinion be probable, this is one of the cases in which it ought not to be followed. The absolution from censures must always precede the sacramental absolution. The bishop may take away the censure first, and send the convert to confession afterwards; but the general practice and the safest is to hear the confession, dispose the penitent, take away the censure in foro interno or externo, as the case may require, and then proceed to the sacramental absolution. The profession of faith should be made before the sacramental absolution. It is generally the Creed of Pius IV., which is in all our Rituals, with the following words added, after 'Council of Trent,' last paragraph but one: 'And all things handed down, defined, and declared by the General Council of the Vatican, particularly concerning the primary and infallible magisterium of the Roman Pontiff.'

# 3. Doubtfully baptised.

Since in all the sects there exists a looseness of opinion with regard to the doctrine of regeneration, and consequently a slovenliness or carelessness in the manner of conferring baptism, the rule adopted by the Catholic Church at present is to baptise conditionally all those coming over from heresy of whose valid baptism we cannot be quite certain. Ritual says we are to inquire into the matter as well as we can; but, as it is difficult to find out the truth, conditional baptism is generally given. The Synod of Maynooth says, 'Baptizantur sub conditione hi qui ad religionem Catholicam in nostra regione convertuntur.... Usum itaque istum retinendum esse volumus, nisi plane constet ex fide dignis testimoniis personam de qua agitur baptizatam valide fuisse.'\* The first Provincial Synod in England decreed that 'all persons born after the year 1773 and baptised amongst Protestants, should be, on their conversion to the faith, conditionally baptised.'

It is clear, from these decrees and the general practice, that even when the doubt is merely negative conditional baptism should be given. There is a diversity of opinion among theologians, and even synodal decrees, as to the order of reception. They all agree as to what is to be done; but some put them in a different order, and the ceremonies vary in some slight matters in different countries.

The first Synod of Westminster decrees that \* Cap. XI. no. xxxix. p. 75.

adult converts are to be baptised privately (non fat publice sed omnino privatim) with holy water (aqua lustrali), and without any solemn ceremonies. From this it would seem that conditional baptism ought to be given in the sacristy, and not in the church or at the font. The same decree says: 'Confessio etiam Sacramentalis semper in tali casu est exigenda.' This holds for England.

In Ireland the form of adult baptism had to be gone through, as this privilege was not extended to that country. The American bishops got leave to use the form of infant baptism for adults; and the bishops in the Synod of Maynooth got the same privilege for Ireland from 1876 until 1881; but there is a proviso in the grant that the Irish prelates endeavour to return to the longer form, imperceptibly and by degrees. The mind of the Church is evidently to return to the Ritual when it is possible and convenient.

The order of reception seems to be:

- 1. Confession; not sacramental, but recommended.
  - 2. Profession of faith.
  - 3. Conditional baptism.
  - 4. Absolution from censures.
  - 5. Sacramental confession completed.
- 6. Sacramental absolution (conditional) from sins. This order seems to vary a little from that prescribed by the Holy Office; but O'Kane, in Notes on the Rubrics of the Ritual, reconciles them thus:

'The same order' of the Holy Office 'seems to

imply that the confession should be made only after the baptism. At least, it clearly implies that the convert is not required to confess until he has been conditionally baptised. Yet there is no doubt that a confession before baptism, if the convert desires it or is willing to make it, has many advantages. priest is thereby better able to judge of his dispositions, and has also a better opportunity of giving him special instructions, of exciting him to sorrow, and preparing him to receive with greater fruit that Sacrament, whichever it be, that he is now capable of receiving. These considerations, it may be seen, are urged by the bishops of England in the preamble to the question which they submitted to the Holy See. Hence the common practice hitherto has been, first, to hear the convert's confession, and dispose him for the worthy reception of either Sacrament; then to baptise him conditionally; and lastly, having got him to repeat the confession, at least in general terms, and to supply whatever may be judged necessary to make it full and complete, to give him conditional absolution. When, as is usually the case, the confession is made to the same priest, the penitent is not required to repeat the sins he has already confessed in detail, but merely to accuse himself of them in general terms.

'This practice may seem, perhaps, hardly in accordance with the order prescribed by the Holy Office; but we think it is not at variance with that order, provided the confession before baptism be not exacted, but merely recommended. This order, we

take it, is not to be understood as prohibiting all confession before the baptism, but simply as requiring that sacramental confession be made after the baptism; and this clearly is the case when the previous confession is repeated, in the manner supposed before absolution.'\*

The completion of the confession, or the sacramental part of it, need not come immediately after the baptism. It can be deferred for some days, and there may be reasons for such postponement. For instance, a priest may discover an impediment in the marriage of the convert, may have to give time for the removal of an occasion of sin, or for some kind of reparation which has to be made. The impediments of matrimony are not the same in the Protestant Church as in ours; and when people marry within our prohibited degrees they need a dispensation, and the bishop has to be consulted.

There is, however, no reason for deferring the absolution from censures. This is given, according to the Ritual, after the profession of faith; but, as a person dubiously baptised is not capable of any absolution until after the conditional baptism, he should receive the absolution from censures immediately. There are two forms of the profession of faith; that of Pius IV., which is used in England, and given generally in the Rituals, is as follows:

'I, N. N., with a firm faith believe and profess all and every one of those things which are contained

<sup>#</sup> O'Kane, chap. v. p. 486.

in that creed which the Holy Roman Church maketh use of. To wit: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages; God of God; Light of Light; true God of true God; begotten, not made, consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, and is to come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and lifeend. giver, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And [I believe] one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

'I most steadfastly admit and embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

'I also admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our Holy Mother the Church has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures. Neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

- 'I also profess that there are truly and properly seven Sacraments of the new law instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one. To wit: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony; and that they confer grace: and that of these, Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the revealed and approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the aforesaid Sacraments.
- 'I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy Council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification.
- I profess likewise that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation. I also confess that under either

kind alone Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament.

- 'I constantly hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.
- 'Likewise that the Saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invocated, and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.
- 'I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, of the Mother of God ever Virgin, and also of other Saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given to them.
- 'I also affirm that the power of Indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.
- 'I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church for the mother and mistress of all Churches; and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ.
- 'I likewise undoubtingly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the holy Council of Trent; and all things handed down, defined, and declared by the General Council of the Vatican, particularly concerning the primacy and infallible magisterium of the Roman Pontiff. I condemn, reject, and anathematise all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematised.

'I, N. N., do at this present freely profess and sincerely hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved; and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and unviolated, with God's assistance, to the end of my life.'

The profession of faith approved by the Holy Office for America, and adopted seemingly in the Synod of Maynooth for Ireland, is the following:

- 'I, N. N., son (daughter) of . . . . , of the age of . . . years, on my knees before you, . . . , having before my eyes the Holy Gospels, which I touch with my hands, and knowing that no one can be saved without that faith, which the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church holds, believes, and teaches, against which I grieve that I have greatly erred, inasmuch as, born of parents who were out of the said Church, I have held and believed doctrines opposed to her teaching,—
- 'Now, with grief and contrition, profess that I believe the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church to be the only and true Church established on earth by Jesus Christ, to which I submit myself with my whole heart. I believe all the articles that she proposes to my belief, and I reject and condemn all that she rejects and condemns; and I am ready to observe
- \* In the original the name of the Grand Inquisitor is put here; and as he lives in Rome, the name of the bishop or priest to whom the profession is made will do.

all that she commands me, and especially I profess that I believe:

- 'One only God in Three Divine Persons, distinct from and equal to each other, that is to say, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.
- 'The Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the hypostatic union of the two natures, the divine and human; the Divine Maternity of the most

holy Mary, together with her most spotless virginity.

- 'The true, real, and substantial presence of the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and Divnity, of our Lord Jesus Christ in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.
- 'The seven Sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind, that is to say, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, Matrimony.
- 'Purgatory, the Resurrection of the Dead, Everlasting Life.
- 'The primacy, not only of honour, but also of jurisdiction, of the Roman Pontiff, successor of St.
- Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Vicar of Jesus Christ.
  'The veneration of Saints and of their images.
- 'The authority of the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and of the Holy Scriptures, which we must interpret and understand only in the sense which our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church, has held and holds.
- 'And everything else that has been defined and declared by the sacred Canons, and by the General

Councils, especially by the holy Council of Trent. And all things handed down, defined, and declared by the Œcumenical Council of the Vatican, particularly concerning the primacy and infallible magisterium of the Roman Pontiff.

'With a sincere heart therefore, and with unfeigned belief. I detest and abjure every error, heresy and sect opposed to the said Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, Roman Church. So help me, God, and these His Holy Gospels which I touch with my hands.

'I, . . . . , as aforesaid, have with my own hand signed this act of my sincere conversion and return into the bosom of the same Church, which I have recited word for word.

'This . . . day of . . . . . .

When the profession of faith is made and signed, if required by any particular statute of the diocese, as there is no general law on the subject, absolution from censures should be given immediately in the form prescribed in the Ritual, except that, instead of the words propter tale factum, the words propter harresim et schisma be used. Some say that in the case of material heretics forsan be interposed before incurristi; but as the Church does not make the distinction in externis between formal and material heretics, and as the absolution is in foro externo, there would seem to be no need for the particle. However, there is authority for its use if any one wishes to avail himself of it.

In hearing the first confession of a convert, it

ought not to be lost sight of that the penitent is to be treated differently from ordinary ones. theories which are rife in non-Catholic bodies, although they can never interfere with the natural law, still change the manner of judging of the individual, and considerably modify the keenness and justness of his conscience. Some things which his party or sect consider as serious transgressions may not be so at all in Catholic theology, and things which we consider mortal sins may be legalised by custom amongst persons outside the Church. testants again are not accustomed to examine their consciences. They ask pardon of God for all their sins, and do not trouble themselves about calling them severally to mind, as they know very well that God sees them all. It is often more difficult to remember the doings of manhood than those of youth, and often hard to distinguish between sins of mere custom and sins of malice. On these several accounts it would be well not to be too rigorous and exacting in the first confession, and to be very careful how the species of sins are to be examined into, as well as the number. It is generally better for the priest to save converts the trouble of examining their consciences by putting questions which will soon exhaust all that he can have done. Their ideas, moreover, of the observance of the Sunday, apart from the abstaining from servile works, are very confused, and few consider themselves bound under mortal sin to attend their places of worship.

That the obligation of confession when the bap-

tism is doubtful is theoretically doubtful, and therefore not at all necessary, was maintained by many theologians until a late decision of the Holy See laid down the contrary. It is now practically certain; but its theory is not altered; and that may serve scrupulous confessors towards forming their conscience in being easy with converts in their first confession. well also not to make the duty irksome in any way. Experience shows that it is not until they have long practised Catholic devotions, and formed their consciences on Catholic principles, that converts can see clearly the nature and deformity of their past sins. The Council of Trent requires a confession of sins as they are upon the conscience, hic et nunc, and not as they may appear to a conscience after it has been schooled and exercised.

It is mentioned that the absolution is to be given sub conditione, but the words of the condition are not mentioned in any Ritual. If there be a delay between the reception and the sacramental absolution, you may find some small venial sin of vanity or complacency, or of want of temper, and this would justify you in putting all antecedent sins with it and giving absolute absolution according to the usual formula. If this does not occur it would be well to adopt the advice of Cardinal de Lugo, given for dying persons whose signs are doubtful, 'absolutio impendi debet sub conditione explicita, mente concepta.' Si tu es capax is the next best way of putting it, because it is clear that you cannot so well use si es dispositus when it is your business to decide for him, as for any other

penitent, whether he be disposed or not. The Te Deum and other prayers may be said either before or after this absolution, according to circumstances.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### FIRST COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION.

It is not always well to give converts all the Sacraments they can receive at once. There is no doubt that they are well prepared, and a soul can never be more pure or sinless than it is the moment after baptism, if it never had been baptised before. Freedom from sin is only one of the conditions, though the chief one, for receiving worthily. This freedom from sin can be had just as well by a good confession at any time in life; yet it is generally considered as more consonant to Catholic practice not to go always straight from the confessional to the altar-rails, but to spend some time in garnishing the soul with other virtues, in order to prepare a more becoming dwelling for the Lord of Hosts. One ought to have a chamber well cleaned and lighted up for the reception of a friend; but it would show more appreciation of the visit to have that chamber neatly furnished and ornamented with articles of vertù which he would love to look upon, especially if he knew that they were procured to gratify his peculiar taste. It is so in Communion.

There is the more necessity in giving a convert a long and careful preparation for Communion. For the first time to realise that you receive your Lord and Saviour—for the first time to feel that you have Him whom the angels are not worthy to receive given to you as the food of your soul—for the first time to know that you are made inheritor of the promise of eternal life by a worthy Communion, is an act so fraught with weight and importance that it should not be done in a hurry. The Church is averse, by her modern discipline, to too much preparation, and condemns those Jansenistic practices which keep people away from the Sacraments through making them dwell more upon their own unfitness than upon the mercy and goodness of God; yet she has always prescribed a due preparation, as we see in her prayer-books and rituals.

A convert, not being accustomed to anything of the importance of a Catholic Communion in the whole of his previous life, needs some instructions and devotional exercises to elicit from him a firm active faith in the Real Presence first of all. Sectaries who have a celebration of some kind, or who receive what they call the Sacrament, go to their Communion-table in a very careless manner. They know it is something holy, or out of the ordinary way of eating and drinking, but that is all. It is well, then, to cure this old habit at once, by letting a convert see and understand the difference between a simple love-feast or sacred rite and the real solemn act of the reception of his God. Ritualists, and others like them, who did believe in a Real Presence in their former Sacraments, should be made to see that there is a great

difference between fancying a Real Presence and believing it as firmly as your own existence. There must be some difference here; and if doubts or difficulties arise in their minds there ought to be a little patience exercised in dispelling them. Let their faith be not only firm, but lively and actual, and that can be seen more from the preparation they make than from their words.

When an act of faith is made, it would be a good plan to prescribe some visits before the tabernacle, when, in silence and in the shades of evening, a newly-converted soul could commune with our Lord in this prison of His love, and learn how to speak mentally to Him, offering acts of homage and adoration in words which the sensation of the moment itself will suggest rather than in the dry printed words of any manual. This practice, begun then, will continue during life, and is one of the sweetest consolation in moments of affliction and trial. many heavenly acts are thus inspired and made; and how sweet it is to know that He is always with us, and that He hears the inaudible sighs of the heart, the longings of the soul, and communicates something of His own sweetness to the child that has now been made one of His living members, and tastes for the first time the sweetness of reposing in confidence on His divine word, and is not carried about by the theological fancies of this or that teacher!

If a convert is of a timid disposition it would not be well to permit him to dwell too much on his own unworthiness, on his past sins, his contests against grace, or his want of correspondence with the divine will. If he feels cast down and discouraged at the sight of the past it is a good sign; and if he feels too unworthy to approach, let him meditate upon our Lord's words, 'Come to Me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.' Let him see that there is no disposition more pleasing to Jesus Christ, either in the tabernacle or elsewhere, than that of 'He resisteth the proud and gives His humility. grace to the humble.' Humility begets soon a childlike confidence which is very pleasing to our Divine Redeemer, and an excellent disposition for receiving Him in the Sacrament of His love. Books may be used to foster this disposition in the soul, and the words of encouragement from a priest's lips are also a great help. It is not good to expect too much delight and spiritual consolation in the first Communion. Our Lord may choose to reserve this to a future time, and He may give it. We are not the disposers of His graces. We must receive them thankfully and joyfully when they come, and wait patiently for them when they are kept away. spiritual fruit of Communion does not consist in certain sensible liquefactions and delights, but in the more inner strengthening of the will, which can only be perceived in a readiness to overcome temptations.

Of course a convert must know that it is strictly required that he should always go to Communion fasting; and this fast means a fast from everything from midnight—the swallowing of the least morsel of food or drop of water wilfully would break this

fast. The Church has ordained so from the beginning, and dispenses with it only for the dying, when the Sacrament is received by way of viaticum, or a companion and support for the long journey to eter-Besides this disposition of the body, by way of preparation it would be well also to array it in our best clothing, as if going to a feast. ternal should show our internal respect, and it is surprising what an effect the ornamenting of the body has upon the dispositions of the soul. This latter preparation is not required, but any one will see that cleanness of body is agreeable to God as well as cleanness of conscience, and at the Last Supper our Lord washed His disciples' feet. He said also that they were all clean but one, so that cleanness of body is something agreeable to Him if done by way of preparation for Holy Communion. To eat with unwashed hands doth not defile a man; but to wash them in His honour, without considering it indispensable, must be agreeable to Him. Acting on this principle the Church has always recommended children to be cleanly and tidily dressed for their first Communion; and although the wedding-garment mentioned in Scripture has reference more to the conscience than to the body, it may well be applied to the latter also in a secondary sense.

After receiving Communion, it is better to spend some time in silent thought, making acts of faith, love, confidence, hope, petition, &c., as prescribed. As if some great personage came to visit our humble home, prepared to bestow favours and riches on

us, we would rather let him see our needs than be too demonstrative about them, so, in thanksgiving after Communion, it is well to let our Lord see, upon our own quiet unobtrusive showing, what are our spiritual needs; and it is enough, like our Lady at the marriage of Cana, to say, 'I have no humility,' or 'I have no faith,' or 'I have no charity,' or 'I have no courage,' just as she hinted the necessities of their hosts, 'They have no wine.' He knows all our needs Himself perfectly, as He knew perfectly what the wants of the marriage-feast were; but He chooses that we should see them ourselves, and suggest them to Him.

It is a great thing to contemplate that He gives Himself to us; and, as He has, will He not give us all things we stand in need of? He may not give them at the moment, for He likes us to converse with Him, and to learn His language, and to come to visit Him in the solitude of the tabernacle; but He is always mindful of us, and perhaps, when we have just begun to despair of having our prayers heard, He will give us a full measure of blessings, pressed together and running over.

When some minutes have been spent in this internal communion, a prayer-book may be taken up, and the usual prayers after Communion read. Communicants should not go away immediately after Mass. The sacred species remain unchanged within us for some minutes; and it is not becoming to go away and mix up in our usual daily business until they be entirely changed, and the spiritual takes the

place of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ within our bosoms.

Let us remember one promise He made to those who receive Him worthily: 'I will raise him up on the last day.'

The Sacrament of Confirmation should be received by a convert as soon as possible. This Sacrament is intended to strengthen us in our faith, to give us courage to confess it openly, and bear all sorts of persecution for its sake. Any one who knows the habits of people living in heresy will see how necessary this Sacrament is for a convert. Become a Swedenborgian or a Plymouth Brother, and your Protestant relations will let you alone. If you become a Baptist or a Wesleyan, they will likely subject you to a little playful banter upon your new Bethesda, or make some remarks about your new parson or his wife. If you become a Ritualist they will shake their heads with solemn auguries of danger; but if you become a Catholic, they forget all their politeness, affection, tenderness, and humanity. Their lives seem embittered and without hope, and the heartless hopeless sighs they heave are more painful than sheer persecution. Let a neophyte, therefore, prepare for Confirmation, and receive this Sacrament with nearly the same dispositions as those brought to the Holy Table. In the day of persecution, be not troubled; for our Lord says, 'It will be given you at that hour what you shall answer.'

This Sacrament is the completion of a conversion.

There are dangers besetting the path of a convert, and to them it is well to give some attention.

#### CHAPTER XLIV.

### DANGERS FROM ONESELF.

A WORD of warning is the preventative of many It is disagreeable when uttered, as most heartsores. good advices are; but it is gratefully remembered even when the slighting of it has brought us into difficulties, and its recollection has saved us from worse. It is a thankless office to give warning advice by word of mouth, but the same good effort does not meet with such opposition when written in a book. Sir Benjamin Backbite's progeny still flourishes, and the School for Scandal shows no sign of decay (indeed it would be anti-scriptural if it did); but that does not make us throw up our arms and despair. In social failings, satire may exhaust itself, and leave them still surviving. Stronger doses only give them a more vigorous life. In spiritual matters, where the soul is under the influence of grace, lessons will be taken from a book which clergymen would be loth to give viva roce. A book is read and thought on, the author nobody knows; but the living voice comes from one who is vis-à-vis with you, and if he be too stern and gospel-like, he is considered to be wanting in politeness, and his words fail of their effect. In some cases where an aroma of sanctity

gives a man power to act the saint, his words may be well received, and believed as oracles; but these cases are extremely rare. There are many converts who are so well versed in spiritual things, after a fashion, that they could even advise their friends who never had to search through tomes of ecclesiastical lore for their faith, but had it given to them before they were conscious of its value, who may feel hurt by having advice given them in a work of this kind; but they may remember that there are several of their weaker brothers and sisters who require it very much, and will receive it better from the page of a book than from their lips or those of the author.

There is sometimes a slighting spirit manifested in Catholic society against converts. They are looked upon as babes of grace that are to be edified; and their opinions, even when thoroughly sound and orthodox, are supposed to deserve questioning. In the following few chapters we speak from experience, and if any one is offended we cannot help it. Truth is, even when bitter, more to be valued than the pleasing of friends, no matter how dear and excellent.

There is one danger which besets many converts, and they are not the only people to whom it is a danger, and that is pride. Those distinguished for learning and position, whose accession to any community would be considered an honour, are the last to be infected with this vice. There is a middle class of converts, rather above the ordinary standard of education, and under the ranks of erudition or

learning, possessing property and position, who think they confer an honour on the Church by becoming members of it. Their previous associations drive them into this line of thought. Their social position is far above their neighbours of the Catholic Church. They have to dissociate themselves, to a certain extent, from their Protestant belongings; and they find themselves, in consequence, stars of a considerable magnitude amidst those who admire their sacrifice and appreciate their devotion. quiousness is not confined, unfortunately, to the poor and vulgar; it permeates higher grades of the social ladder. Circumstances work upon the converts of this class so powerfully that they come to consider themselves as an acquisition to the poor down-trodden Church they have been accustomed to despise. It is true they are locally; but it would be better for themselves if they did not know it, or, if knowing it, they did not act upon the know-

To all these, and others who follow their example on a minor scale, we would just remark that they confer no honour whatever on a Church that has numbered amongst her members canonised Saints, who sat upon thrones. They may be exceptions in an island, but they are scarcely units in the grand universality of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is they that have been honoured and favoured by conversion to the truth—a privilege far above their deserts, from a human point of view, if they try to treat their Catholic neighbours with patronising con-

descension. They are in danger of being too genteel to take their turn at the confessional, and to wish for a special place at the altar-rails, where they are not apt to come in contact with rags and poverty. They can afford the first places in the church, and perhaps a privileged pew in the organ-gallery. They would run away in disgust from Blessed Benedict Labré, and yet they might be glad on the day of judgment if he would intercede for them before their Judge. Their case is a difficult one, and it is hard to manage it. All that can be said is that saintly kings were very humble, and that the Apostles whom our Lord chose to be the builders of His Church were not in any manner distinguished except by zeal and holiness of life.

Converts, no matter what their grade socially, should always consider themselves as children in the Church until they have become thoroughly imbued with its doctrines and practices. They will lose nothing by this, but their very humility will be a sermon to all their Catholic acquaintances.

Another danger comes from the anxiety many converts have to make their former companions follow their example. This is a very laudable thing at first sight. They have found that peace of God which surpasseth all understanding, and they would like to communicate the same to all those whom they have left behind them in heresy. This motive causes Hints for Protestants, How I became a Convert, The Way to the True Church, and hundreds of other works, ranging from slim newspaper letters to fat

pamphlets, to glut the booksellers' stalls and be scattered among the crowds. A great deal of good may possibly be done by such works, and many may owe their conversion to them; but, in reality, their former friends look upon them very much as the foxes did upon their companion which had lost The foxes may not have been very wise, and the convert's former companions may not have been so either; but people very rarely listen attentively to those who have left their ranks, no matter how high and noble may have been the motive which made them resolve upon the change. Neophytes had better learn their new creed well before they begin to preach it. The day of Pentecost only occurred once, and it would be the height of rashness for one just converted to begin to lecture on theology before he has learnt its grammar. be that he was a lion in the fold he left. That is not to the point. He is only a cub in the fold he has joined, and let him wait until he grows if he wants to be of any use. There is plenty of time. the groves of Academus a man was obliged to hold his tongue for five years before he was considered qualified to speak. A similar rule would not be necessary now when all are so wise in their own conceits; but it would prevent a great deal of harm.

Catholics, who in these countries are deprived of the opportunities of a university education, and whose fathers lived on sufferance, and struggled to keep them from being washed away by the various tides of persecution, welcome to their ranks with alacrity converts of superior education and gentlemanly manners. They will give them the editing of their newspapers or the tutorship of their children. That is all good and well; but we would say to the converts themselves, that it would be well to remember the words of St. Paul: 'Non neophytum, ne in superbiam elatus incidat in laqueum diaboli.' preservation of the gift of faith depends upon learning rather than teaching. It is a dangerous thing to try to teach, unless one is sent, and even then it would be better for a convert to imitate Jonas than Most of them, indeed, do imitate Jonasthey fly from honours and positions, and when forced by obedience into them they give a new halo to the Church of their adoption. The Church in England owes a great deal to converts; but to converts of the humble, simple, docile stamp; not to the converts who wrote errors in the Rambler and Home and Foreign Review, and who dished up diatribes from the Allgemeine Zeitung in English journals during the sitting of the Vatican Council.

This danger would be avoided by converts observing the custom attributed to ghosts, of not speaking until they are spoken to. When one is asked for an account of the faith that is in him, it is time enough for him to proceed to reason about it. Dr. Newman did not write his Apologia until thirty years after his conversion, and then only in order to defend himself from calumny. Reticence is a very good habit. It gives one time to think calmly over a serious step, whereas in the first days of conversion

everything seems couleur de rose, and rather more enchanting than experience proves it to be.

This leads us to speak of another danger ab intus. A convert finds a great deal of natural satisfaction in the first days of his Catholic existence. The church seems a hallowed spot, and it is delightful to assist at Mass and Vespers. Early and late, manuals of devotion are read with avidity, and pondered over with pleasure. There is nothing which belongs to the church, from the candlesticks on the altar to the holy-water font at the door, which does not seem to possess an incentive to devotion. Holiness then is like that of a novice in religion: all fervour, gushing with sensibility. All who are acquainted with the spiritual life know that the time of sensible fervour is the dangerous period of it. God is loved because of the pleasure found in worshipping Him. James, and John were awake on Thabor, and wanted to enjoy the sweetness of the vision always: 'Lord, it is good for us to be here;' but they fell asleep in Gethsemani, and the warnings and plaintive voice of our Redeemer could not make them watch one hour They kept away from the Passion until all danger was over; and Peter, who ventured into the hall of the high-priest, notwithstanding his protestations at the Last Supper, behaved himself rather discreditably, to say the least of it. It is so with souls always. They are ready to do wonderful things in the moments of fervour, and feel all liquefied with divine love. This does not last. The time of trial and aridity comes, and a coolness in the service of God comes with it. The mornings get very cold when there is question of daily Mass; and the evenings become foggy, wet, and disagreeable when it is time to start for Vespers. There is danger, then, of neglecting not only works of supererogation, but works of obligation, and of losing not only piety and devotion altogether, but even the faith itself which it cost so much to acquire. Hence it would be well not to allow converts to do too much in the beginning; it is better to leave them always in a disposition of longing to do more. The idea of a religious vocation should be discouraged until they have learnt to practise well and faithfully the ordinary duties of a Christian life in the world. Many converts have lost their faith by being allowed to do too much in the beginning. They become like the devout nuns St. Francis of Sales had to guide. One year they fasted three days in the week, and the next year they asked the Saint if they might not advance in perfection by fasting four days. 'Yes,' he said; 'and the year after five days, and the year after that six days, and then seven days; and what will you do then? Unless the Church changes the number of days in the week, your perfection must come to an end.' There is a limit to human strength even when aided by grace, and it is well to bear this in Taking upon oneself a multitude of devotions and vocal prayers is a short way to doing them all carelessly, and therefore without much profit. is better to undertake a few things, and do those well; and when people find themselves thwarted by

a prudent direction, let them know that God gives them credit for good intentions.

Those who are most in danger, after their conversion, are people with views. Some have views about the ornaments and some about the functions of the sanctuary. Some have views about fasting, though it is remarkable that very few in England have riews about fasting too much. Some do not confine their riews to discipline, but extend them to doctrines; and some are so wedded to their rieus that they cannot endure anybody else's. The most intolerable of viewy people are those who have views about architecture. Their rieus may take a Gothic turn, and then woe betide all the oblong churches with square windows. They are called barns and factories, and all sorts of names; and if they have a portico, even though the pillars be of the purest Ionic or Corinthian orders, they remind our Goth of a theatre or a music-hall. We have known some to go so far as to cut their beard after the fashion of a Gothic tower, and to get pointed tops put to their shoes. Their furniture, even down to the poker and tongs, was all made from Gothic designs; and the most costly material would be used for the most ignoble purpose, provided some Gothic idea could thereby be carried out. This sort of spirit, carried into kindred subjects, or any subject at all, would seem to make the viewy person simply a bore, and, as such, he could be barely tolerated; but, in faith and morals, hobbies lead very often into errors, and hence it is very dangerous to get astride of them.

Hobbies are dangerous in everything, but they are apt to prove fatal in religion.

The indulging of views is a different thing from having a correct taste and judging accordingly; but in tastes we should never set our own opinion up as infallible, and condemn others. Every country and every local Church has its peculiarities; they have grown up imperceptibly in the course of years, and it would show a great want of taste indeed to condemn in others what did not suit our own ideas of propriety or becomingness. Islanders are generally less Catholic in their tastes than those who dwell in continents, and can, in a few hours, be carried into the midst of new styles, new ideas, new ways of speech, and new customs. It is only when one has an opportunity of throwing off his insular notions that he can fairly estimate the worth of those matters in which others differ from himself. The great rule of the Church is in necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas. If the last prevail, instructions are unnecessary.

The riews which some converts have about the translation of the Bible and the wording of some of the Catholic prayers may be correct enough; but they ought to remember that Catholics are accustomed to saying their prayers in this way, and although grammar and good sense would suggest an alteration here and there, it would be dangerous to make it. This was shown at the time of the revision of the Breviary. All the hymns were corrected according to the rules of prosody, except those written by St. Thomas of

Aquin; and the Pope ordered them not to be touched, because the faithful had committed them to memory. Hence our O Salutaris and Tantum Ergo are still sung, and sung with fervour, although good Alvarez would find it difficult to tell what their metre is. Views have been at work on the Litany of Loretto and some more of our prayers; but somehow the people prefer their old mumpsimus to all new alterations.

# CHAPTER XLV.

## DANGERS FROM CATHOLICS.

THERE are very few traits in personal character so dangerous to one's peace and happiness as a disposition to be easily scandalised. This disposition arises in some from a high opinion of what other people ought to be, and in others from a captious temper, akin to faultfinding. It may seem praiseworthy to have a high opinion of what our neighbours ought to be, especially if we are imperfect ourselves; but no one ever can find anything to praise in a faultfinder. As long as this world is inhabited by simple human beings, there must be faults in abundance, and it cannot be a difficult matter to gather a bundle of them when we please; so that one who goes a-hunting for them needs no pointer or setter to mark out where his game lies, the objects of his search present themselves at every step.

No one could have a higher opinion of the per-

fection required and attainable in others than our Divine Lord. He said, 'Be ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect;' yet He was very kind and tender to defects and imperfections. He could always excuse faults. 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,' is only a preface to 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' A convert who knows the theory of perfection taught in the Catholic Church, and begins to practise it according to his strength and the amount of grace he receives, will be very much scandalised, if he be not thoroughly of a charitable mood of mind, at many things he will come across in the lives of Catholics.

The first thing that will strike him is their easygoing indifference to the conversion of Protestants. He cannot imagine how, possessing as they do the comfort of settled opinions and settled forms of worship, they will not show some anxiety and work harder for the enlightenment of poor heretics, who are earnestly seeking the truth and know not where to find The Catholic is too selfish, in the eyes of a new convert. He does not bestir himself as he ought, and he makes light of conversions altogether. people become Catholics, it is their own business; and if they do not, it is not his business. Why disturb him in his reading of the Garden of the Soul by asking him to mix with a neighbouring heretic, whom he heard calling the Pope names in his devotions? This sort of apathy is apt to shock the glowing redhot fervour of a convert, and make him despise the Catholics who are afflicted with it. Catholics know

by experience how intrusive zeal is, and how very unwelcome is an attempt at proselytism. The convert will meet with more than apathy sometimes: he will find an odd Catholic with very revengeful ideas, and who has no objection to harbour a satisfactory thought at the probable damnation of some of his Protestant neighbours, especially if they have oppressed or injured him. This is bad enough in itself, but, coming to the knowledge of a neophyte, it is an unmitigated evil. Still such things must be bornein The shooting of a landlord is murder, and the Church does not approve of it in any way whatever; yet Catholics will be found who defend it on fallacious grounds, and say a 'Serve him right!' when they hear of such a catastrophe. One must take into consideration how wild ideas of self-defence may sometimes get mixed up with real piety, and disturb the logic which cannot see so great an evil in matters which are not looked upon from the cool standpoint of indifference. We have heard of converts being scandalised at a Catholic's idea of penal laws. Penal laws do not always oblige in conscience, and it is the business of those who are appointed to see them carried out. If a man buys a box of cigars, or a woman a bundle of lace in Brussels, they are not obliged to pay duty on them. These commodities become their property when they have paid their money for them; and if duty is payable on them, that is the business of the Custom-house officers, and not the business of the purchaser. In some countries a great many of the laws, which in truth are not so,

are looked upon as penal; and hence arises a certain satisfaction in being able to evade them. This spirit has been engendered by years of suffering, and cannot be exercised in a day. It requires an intimate acquaintance with the habits and feelings of the peasantry of any country in order to understand the way in which they look at things, which horrify outsiders and get approved of by themselves. The raids of Rob Roy and the borderers were looked upon as robbery by the English; but the freebooters themselves had a different standard of morality, and gloried in pillaging the Saxon or lowlander upon whom their broad fields were conferred by a hostile Parliament. It is not our purpose to justify the deeds of borderers or rebels, but merely to point out that certain deeds give scandal because the motives of the perpetrators are not understood. It is very painful for a Catholic to look at the grand monasteries in ruins, and the churches and cathedrals built by our forefathers in the hands of heretics, while he has to worship in a shed, or be hunted from places built and consecrated by his race. There are many ways of looking at things, and very few can see all sides of a question.

There are two roads by which a convert may be led from the mark of consistency when falling amid Catholics. He may agree with every extravagant opinion that is advanced by his elder brethren in the Church, or he may make a stand against them. To keep a middle course is difficult. It is very hard for an Englishman to hear his country called ugly names

across the Channel, and he cannot deny but that those who call the names have very good reasons for calling them. If he tries to drop his nationality he commits a fault; and if he tries to gloss over the deeds of his forefathers he commits a greater. His own good sense, of course, will guide him in forming his new opinions; for new opinions he must form after he has acquired the knowledge of the duties of his new state of life. To follow up the many ways in which he may be scandalised by opinions which he hears from Catholics would be an endless and a thankless task. There is one thing which has guided many before, and may serve as a guide to others in the future. Let us consider ourselves as Catholics first, and natives of the countries where we were Any one who forms his opinions on the born next. doctrines of the Church is sure to be always right; and, when he has thus formed them, he can easily sift the wheat from the chaff. Many opinions are advanced by Catholics which the Church reprobates: and any one who is guided by her decisions cannot go astray in minor matters.

Another mode in which converts may be scandalised is looking at the way Catholics behave in church on the Continent. It takes time to accustom one-self to this. You go into a grand basilica, and you see people walking about during the celebration of Mass, and paying very little attention to what is going on. Now, having been accustomed to the great propriety of behaviour observed in England in all churches, Catholic and Protestant, it is difficult

at first not to be surprised at the behaviour of French or Italians in their places of worship. The difference is easily accounted for. In these large basilicas there are numbers of chapels, and a person may go and hear Mass at any one of them any time during the When he has heard his Mass, he does morning. not of course consider himself bound to hear all the other Masses which are celebrated in every corner of the church; and he wants to admire the architecture, the paintings, the frescoes, and other beauties of the sacred edifice before he goes away. not the case in our poor island churches. There are few Masses celebrated, and there is very little of high art to call for admiration. A monk who takes his pinch of snuff in St. Peter's, and points you out the beauties of one of the grand frescoes, whilst the Sanctus bell is ringing in a distant part of the basilica, has no idea that he is irreverent. He has said his own Mass, and perhaps heard one or two more, long before you were out of bed that morning, and would give his life at a moment's warning for the salvation of his brethren. Again: the great churches in Rome and elsewhere have no comfortable benches or pews for people to pass the time pleasantly in. thing as stately services are only had on certain occasions, and then you are at liberty to go in or out as you please, and no one thinks of charging you for a place to sit, or showing you into it.

A person would take scandal, again, at seeing some of the Spanish ceremonies on great days, and the way in which they dress up the statues of the Saints. We remember seeing a statue of our Lord, bearing His Cross, dressed in a velvet soutane with beautiful buttons, and the neck ornamented with s silk tie and turn-down collar. It did not cause any irreverence in the beholders; on the contrary, they beat their breasts, and thought of their sins; whilst less-devout beholders were curiously examining the attire of the figure. It is the misfortune, as was said before, of islanders, especially from hyperborean regions, whose tastes were formed under the freezing influence of heresy, to condemn what they do not understand, and to imagine that they themselves possess all the wisdom that it is possible to cram into a given head. We have no right to laugh at the devotion of a lazzarone until we know whether we have as much ourselves, and whether he would not cross his eyes, mouth, nose, and heart with sundry ejaculations to Bacchus and St. Januarius, if he were to enter a Presbyterian church, and look at the big pulpit instead of an altar, and the pews full of people who never kneel. Leaving any kind of heresy, and coming into the Catholic Church, is like being brought up in one of the Pacific islands from infancy, and then suddenly being launched forth into continental countries, and whisked by steamboats and railway-trains round and round the world.

Let us imagine our Pacific islander for a moment. First, he wears very little clothes; next, he is very deeply tattoed; thirdly, he has sundry savage ways of behaving himself at meals; and fourthly, if

he be a chief, he has great ideas of his power over the lives and liberties of others. He goes forth to San Francisco, and then through the United States. How his savage heart must fall within him when he sees the human form hid from his view by elaborate and artistic articles of clothing! The dress of one grand lady would actually clothe four dozen of his What waste! Then people have such curious notions about the portion of their bodies which they exhibit that there is neither a blue nor a red line of ornamentation on their faces or hands. He sees them using dangerous weapons in eating, and thinks how grand it would be if he could arm his braves with the implements which fair ladies use to mince up the food he could bite so satisfactorily off the bone. He finds, moreover, that if he attempts to scalp some pugnacious enemy he is apt to get his head into a halter. He marvels exceedingly at all these things, and considers the North Americans a nation of curious savages, notwithstanding their steam-horses and other inventions. When the cold blasts of winter come, he likes to put on clothes himself; and when he looks in the glass, and compares his face with those of his neighbours, he would fain erase the lines made in it by his native customs. He gets used to a knife and fork by degrees, and then begins to understand something of human laws, and the mode of carrying them out.

A convert leaving the naked ritual of John Knox or Calvin is much in the same plight. He may stare

at vestments for a while; get rid by degrees of the assurance of his own salvation, which was tattooed into his soul in infancy or manhood; find the restraint upon the use of Scripture and private judgment very much like our friendly savage's use of a knife and fork; and come to understand that he is no longer a despotic master of his religion and its ways; or, if he have been a Ritualist, that he cannot impose his will upon others, and be any longer a private Pope, but must obey the laws he has submitted to, even though he see them occasionally disregarded.

The best thing a convert could do is to imagine himself to be something like our ideal South-Sea islander, and to wait until he has seen Catholic customs, and learnt Catholic ways, before he begins to judge them, and become thereby scandalised.

There are other sources of scandal, and, alas, they are too real and too formidable to be settled by an argument! One comes from the lower order of Catholics and another from the higher. In our cities and towns there are hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of Catholics whose lives are a disgrace to any religion. Quarrels, drunken brawls, thefts, wifebeatings, and other horrid manifestations of devilry are to be found amongst them, and very often get into the papers. The prisons and the workhouses bear sad evidence to their crime and dissipation; and the question will arise, Has their Church no power over them, or is this the fruit of her teaching? Catholics know very well that these miscrable

wretches never or rarely come near the Church, and that nearly all teaching is lost upon them when drink maddens them, and makes them give way to their ungovernable passions. There are some people who seem to be born with the brand of Cain upon them, and whom not even Saints could improve or make observant. Granting therefore, that these are bad, wretchedly bad, Catholics, we will go a step further, and lay down a proposition which looks extravagant, namely, bad Catholics ought to be the worst Christians in the world. The reason is not far to seek: corruptio optimi pessima. A bad Catholic has to fling aside all the teaching of his youth, all the example of his parents and neighbours, and to stifle the remorse of conscience by numberless excesses, before he can become the depraved monster we find in jails and workhouses.

How can this anomaly be accounted for? To see Irish people in Donegal or Mayo trudging off six or seven Irish miles of a Sunday morning, in order to hear Mass, and walking home the same distance in the evening,—thus turning the Lord's-day into a day of toil in order to assist at the sacred mysteries,—and to find the same people, here in England, within forty yards of a church-door, and never seen inside of it, is a mystery that seems impossible to understand.

There is, however, a key to the riddle. Those who leave their homes under the stress of poverty, or, perhaps, famine, and emigrate to some other country where work and wages are apt to supply them the means of indulging their passions, are in a different state from the poor who wring a scanty subsistence from their toil at home, and seldom have a shilling to spend except upon the necessaries of life. The handling of money (a luxury they were unused to) makes them proud, and the companions with whom their poverty compels them to associate are none of the choicest. They soon lose their ideas of rectitude, and exceed their new companions in the degree at which they arrive in practising the vices they have learnt from them.

Perceiving that they have lost caste, and whirled in a vortex from which they cannot see the way to liberate themselves, they sin for the *bravado* of the thing, and soon begin to glory in their very shame.

This is true especially of girls. They are innocent at home, and modesty is their characteristic feature. No one meeting a peasant-girl on an Irish road can fail to be struck by her modesty, and her chastity will stand the test of bribes and benefits. Let her once fall into the sin of impurity and she becomes completely transformed. They are unaccustomed to secret sins and exterior propriety. They do not know how to act the hypocrite. If they become bad they proclaim their badness just as excessively as they hid their goodness by extra bashfulness. There is something of the same tendency in all the lower orders of Catholics. They are naturally and by training prone to preserve themselves pure and undefiled; but let them once outstep the bounds of chastity and they go headlong into every vice.

Remorse is strong in them, and they drink to drown the recollections of their innocence.

This may in part explain the anomaly to which attention has been drawn, and those who know by experience how the bright and innocent have fallen, or have been wiled into sin, will see its justice.

There is one thing to be observed, however, in their behalf. No matter how degraded they may become or how lost to all sense of shame, they will never insult a priest, and they will listen with tears to his admonitions when all the world despises and disowns them. They know that he has a heart to feel for them, and the first step towards their ruin was the not listening to his voice. That voice comes to them on the bed of sickness, in the depth of misfortune, in the prison-cell, or in the den of infamy, and it brings back the sunshine of their youth once more, and in most cases thorough reformation is the consequence.

Another cause of scandal is the way in which Catholics spend the Sunday. Sabbatarian notions are unknown amongst Catholics, except the few who live in the neighbourhood of Protestants. It was always considered lawful to amuse oneself after the hearing of Mass and the performance of the usual devotions in Catholic countries. These amusements were formerly substitutes for the public-house and its surroundings, which were brought in by Sabbatarian laws. There might have been some excess committed in a few cases, but, as a rule, innocent recreation was always considered a healthy way of spend-

ing a part of the Sunday in Catholic countries. The abuse of a thing does not reflect on its use, and excesses are the doings of individuals, not of a system.

# CHAPTER XLVI.

# DANGERS FROM OTHER CONVERTS.

SOME virtues come by infusion from on High, as faith, hope, and charity; and some are only acquired by repeated acts, like patience, humility, and forbearance. Converts receive the theological or infused virtues at their reception into the Church; and the virtues they have practised from childhood, and which had a great deal to do with their conversion, would seem to have to be practised under new motives. This even need not be. When a person acts for God his motive is pure enough; and certainly a convert to the faith who sacrifices his oncecherished convictions, his home, perchance, and friends, his worldly prospects and social position, to bring himself to the condition of a child in the Catholic Church, has reached not an ordinary, but a heroic, degree of the virtue of fortitude. There is a beautiful soil, then, from which thousands of acts worthy of an eternal recompense are sure to spring. It is a soil fertile with tears and sufferings, and now laved by the Precious Blood in the Sacraments that have been received. No brighter garden could an angelic eye gaze on with such complacency.

is well, therefore, to hedge it in carefully and keep the avenues to it well secured. Quithesaurum publice portat in via is not safe in its custody, and our Lord guards us against parading the treasure we have received.

Among the large numbers which have in latter years joined the Catholic Church, it is not wonderful to see extremes: to find some coming as near as possible to the outer limit of the Church on the safe side, and to see others standing just over a precipice of error, taking an odd peep into the abyss. The Church allows a great deal of latitude to those who accept her dogmas, and there are a great many opinions freely discussed by Catholic theologians. It is natural that some would recommend themselves to various minds in various degrees; and minds which have been accustomed to indulge in 'views' formerly find some pabulum for the same indulgence in the free opinions and voluntary devotions of the Church. Catholics who differ in minor theological matters do so because they have grown up in societies or been taught in schools where such opinions are for the time in favour. They seldom adopt any of them from conviction, but rather from bias or preference, without knowing very well why. It is no uncommon thing to find two young theologians fighting with interminable syllogisms over the Thomist or Molinist theory of God's foreknowledge; and when they cool down from the fervid heat, one is found to know as much about his pet theory as the other, and both are in the enviable position of knowing nothing at all about either. One opinion seems to be kinder and more tender towards human liberty, and the man of mild disposition falls in love with it; the other seems more majestic and stem, and the stern unbending man makes it a part of himself. They let these opinions go to sleep when they leave the schools, but they are prepared to contend for them if ever an occasion offers. Many opinions are thus formed in youth which do not affect our actions much, and are to be found stowed away in the memory when called for in active life, after perhaps a good deal of rummaging.

A convert has to pick up everything in the way of theology when he is mature in years, and when his judgment is ripened. He knows what he is obliged to believe, and what he may reject without censure. If he begins rejecting all he can and takes to minimising his faith, he is in great danger of drifting into a school of dubious Catholicity. If he takes to swallowing everything that has a pious flavour and a devout taste in it, he is running the other way. A great many converts, tired of arguing and controverting, take a delight in putting their books aside and going in for every devotion, new and old, which they can see or hear of. two classes are formed—the pietists and the minimists-and go on parading their views in conversation, in letters, pamphlets, and volumes, until they can say, each in his turn, Liberari animam meam. There is no call for any one to unburden his mind in this way. If he has restricted or grudging ideas

about the Infallibility let him not boast of them; and if he has large ideas of it and thinks it speaks in every parenthesis of an ecclesiastical document, Catholics do not like to have his idiosyncracies thrust upon them as articles of faith.

Extreme views are never healthy ones. remarked that converts are more apt to rush into these extreme views than those are who have been always Catholics. If a Catholic does announce a proposition that is offensive to pious ears, no one minds it much; but if it comes from the lips of a convert the listeners think he has not yet learnt his Catechism properly. Now this distinction is unjust, because the convert may be twice as well instructed, not only on that point, but on every other, as his older companion. There is an idea afloat also that going in for extreme devotion to our Lady, the souls in purgatory, Saints and their relics, must come against the grain to a convert; and therefore, if he is heard gushing about unapproved miracles, the feeling is that he is acting a part, although in reality he is quite in earnest. If he rejects everything he is not obliged to believe, and accepts this latter with a feeling of dissatisfaction, he is called at once a 'vert, and his honesty is admitted to his disadvantage. There is no good reason for these judgments, yet they are facts to which any one who looks around him can bear witness.

It is, therefore, considered wiser for a convert when first received into the Church to associate, as far as possible, with those who have been always Catholics. Everything draws them the other way. A fellow-feeling is more readily to be found amongst these who have themselves gone through the mental struggles of conversion. The hand of sympathy is held out to them, and their after difficulties are tetter understood by one who has himself passed through the same phases of thought. h wever, must see that for converts to congregate t gether and help each other over difficulties, or into citiers perhaps, is not the safest way of coming to assumire a healthy Catholic instinct. Given all the erelit for good intentions, for piety, for uprightness if life, and zeal for the salvation of souls, there is always structhing askew which no one can point cut, and which cannot be classed among any of the extegories of a ndemned propositions. It is there, You feel it, as you do a draught in a heated church. It makes you shudder, and you do not know what it is it where it comes from. You only feel it.

A man that builds himself a new house and has every piece of furniture shining with great brilliancy is art to undervalue the old château of his neighbour where things look more or less moth-eaten and dingy. In some such guise are converts likely to compare notes with each other. They find themselves and the priests—who were ministers a few years ago—all spick-and-span new. Their church is new, their alters new, their candlesticks new, their hymns new, and everything about the place has an air of newness and brightness about it. Taste is shown in the decorations of the sanctuary; the alter-

boys have robes of some peculiar newness and neatness. Faith is new, and everything new accord-There is a contrast between the dusty old church in the neighbourhood, which is tended by an old French or Irish priest. Everything is in an easy-going style. Nothing at all is new. altar was last patched before the Tractarian movement began, and everything, even to the old housekeeper and the tea-pot, has an air of antiquity. These old priests do not care much about English hymns and graceful ceremonies. The very English they use in the pulpit seems as musty as themselves, and everything about them has such an antique quaint appearance that they seem as if dug up from the neighbouring cemetery.

Jealousies and comparisons are apt to arise between the admirers of Paul and Apollo. with an æsthetic taste go to the everything-new place, and extol its beauties; those with old-fogey notions go to the old place, and despise the new. There are contrasts drawn between the services in one place and the other, and of course the new place gains in the end. Then it becomes fashionable, and grand people patronise it. It gives a tone to the surrounding places. Distinguished converts go there to be received, and distinguished people go there to be married; even distinguished people like to have their distinguished offspring baptised by a distinguished hand in a distinguished font. does good in many ways; and as most places are new in England, they all vie with each other in trying to

keep newer and newer every day. The first fervour is thus kept at furnace-heat, and a grand start is given to the growth of Catholicity. Now to extel such places above all others, and speak as if salvation could scarcely be found out of them, are the dangers to which new converts are exposed. Every one loves more or less the place in which he was spiritually as well as naturally born, and it is but fair to give that a preference. There is a danger looming in the distance. When people become accustomed to these splendid services they begin to attach more importance to them than they are worth, and become unconsciously a sort of Catholic Ritualist. They are apt to despise the poor old church with its old priest and old ways and original rubrics. He is at a disadvantage clearly, and there is no chance of his ever coming up to the new place in splendour. His quaint old ways are laughed at, and his primitive style of language and of living becomes the topic on which devout gossipers love to dwell. Now if they are made the subjects of mere pastime it may not look so bad; but there is great danger to a neophyte in turning a pleasantry at the expense of anything sacred, no matter how grotesque it may appear. Continental Catholics are very much given to making jokes about ecclesiastics and their manners; but that tendency has never got a foothold in this country. Too much primness and propriety is our failing, if it be one, and a seriousness about all things that concern the soul is a good spirit, and deserves fostering, provided it be restrained from running into a scandal-taking disposition. Primness is unnatural, of course; but many things which are so grow to be graceful and becoming by habit.

The best thing a prim convert could do is to go to some primitive quiet Catholic place, near a devout old church, where there is little noise and loudsounding music, to learn how to pray in quiet and silence, and to meditate upon the truths recently believed in. It would be well to keep Catholic society, and learn their ways and imbibe their instincts, before going into the blaze of grand celebrations as they are sometimes called. homily of a simple old priest on the Gospel of the day be laid to heart, instead of the brilliant flashes of oratory. This was the way the ancient Christians were brought up, and this was the way the faith was kept alive in times of persecution. The martyrs were educated in Christianity after this fashion. is the Christianity of the heart. The language of the Spouse is, 'I will lead her into solitude, and speak to her heart.' When the Church wishes to renew the spirit of piety she appoints retreats or missions, where the eternal truths of God's law are proposed to the people's contemplation, and where the solemnity of her worship is used as a luxury or an ornament rather than as the means of conversion. Some may be converted by noise and the flickering of tapers; but it is safer to be converted by deep thought and silent prayer.

### CHAPTER XLVII.

#### DANGERS FROM PROTESTANTS.

'THE enemies of a man are his own household' (Matt. x. 36). Our Lord, in giving us this warning, did not intend to abrogate the law of paternal charity or of paternal rights. He came to divide those connected by ties of blood, and set the example Himself by separating Himself from His humble home in Nazareth during the whole period of His divine mission. The higher order of morality, which we call detachment from earthly ties and earthly affections, was a foundation stone of the Gospel, and is still acknowledged in the Catholic Church and acted upon every day. The Apostles, when they followed our Lord, 'left all things,' even their parents and friends, wives too if they had them. So strictly was this counsel carried out that He refused one of them leave to bury a relation, saying, 'Let the dead bury their dead.' One of the charges brought by writers of sensational stories against the monastic and religious system of the Catholic Church is this severance of earthly ties. Why separate a daughter from the love of a mother; and why do mothers themselves forego the love of their offspring in Catholic asceticism? Is it not unnatural, cruel, hard, and uncalled for? It is all that, and more; as those who practise it feel: but it is not a whit harder than that which our Lord preached and practised Himself.

is the source of much joy in after-life, though it may cost a momentary pang. We have often witnessed painful scenes between children and their parents. The children felt drawn to the religious life, and the parents were quite astounded when they heard of it, having built splendid castles in the air on their future worldly prosperity. They yielded to the call of God sometimes with a bad, and sometimes with a good, grace; and we have seen those children who entered religion being the consolation of their old age, whereas those whom they endowed for the privilege of being kicked by monsters called husbands were like the daughters of King Lear.

It is wrong to suppose that young men and young women, who choose God for the portion of their inheritance, are wanting in natural love. They have more of it than the others who seek their own earthly happiness. They have a generosity of disposition; and seeing that the call to a higher life is an attraction of God's love, they feel that it would be the basest ingratitude not to respond to it. may be, and are, misunderstood; but that is a small thing to them. A girl leaves her home and goes off with her officer-husband to India or China, and no one thinks her cruel, though she cause her mother to shed tears, and her father to sigh, at her departure. Let her do as much for her Divine Spouse, by dedicating herself to His service, and the whole crowd of worldlings will give her hard names and call her unnatural.

When these wrenches of domestic affections

happen in the Church, she very wisely takes precautions against their being rashly knitted together again. She takes care to employ the young person who makes the sacrifice in works congenial to her or his high notion of duty, and to transfer to the new work the affection which might be wasted on a selfish father, who would think little of wearing out his daughter's young life in tending him in his infirmities, and leave her penniless when he died. These things are hard to say; but a religious has a right to retaliate on a selfish world, which mis-The Church acts prudently in construes vocations. The nature of a vocation is well all these matters. examined and well tested before this wrench of which we have spoken is permitted; but, once it is done, safeguards are provided against its being undone, and here the world cries, 'Shame!' Yes, the world that has made runaway matches; the world that fornicates; the world that spends the hard earnings of parents on folly and sin; the world that will storm and rage if its whims are not complied with; the world that has its fill of sensual pleasure, cries 'Shame!' and is not a bit ashamed itself of all its vile selfish maxims, ends, aims, and actions. this world is the judge of what is right; and those who listen to the voice of God are foolish, fanatical, or, perchance, a little touched in the head. Beautiful world, and consistent!

A recent convert has the same world to contend with which a Catholic religious has. He has to see parents sighing over his misfortune, and brothers and sisters, with all their fond attachment, grieving over his unaccountable proceeding. It is hard to withstand those tender appeals from outstretched arms and tearful eyes. It is hard to resist the appeals made by nature and domestic love against the stern calls of conscience. But it must be done or the soul is lost; and if a soul finds itself too weak to resist domestic pleadings, it is better to take refuge in flight, and rest in some secure harbour, where persecution will not reach it until it is strong enough to cope with it. But, then, very often a convert has no attraction towards the religious life, for this is another vocation superadded to the first, and what is he to do? This is a point on which it would be impossible to give a general rule. The persecutions, of a family nature, which had to be endured in the beginning of the stream of conversions has now comparatively ceased. There is scarcely a respectable family in England which has not one or two members Catholics. They see these converts sweet, amiable, charitable, and considerate, and they are less disposed to persecute for conscience' sake than they were formerly, before Catholicism made such progress in our midst. Still they do persecute a little. must be borne in satisfaction for past sins.

Another trial awaits the poor convert. He finds himself, by force of circumstances, among strangers, even in the Catholic fold, and perceives human weakness not yet dead amongst them. There is a want of sympathy, a want of natural affection, and some degrees of selfishness amongst his new companions.

He pays a visit to his home, after a long absence, and there he finds all former hard words and cold looks thrown aside; their sorrow is forgotten at the sight of his dear face once more, and in the exuberance of their love they cause him to look upon them with Here is a heavy temptation. He different eyes. feels inclined naturally to leave the hard unsympathetic companions with whom his lot is cast, and return to the household where he feels he would be once more welcome. He would be welcome, certainly, for a few days or weeks; but a longer experience would show him that family ties are perishable, whereas the ties that bind us to heaven grow daily stronger by the very hardships we undergo for their It is therefore a dangerous thing to venture into Protestant society, especially that of our relations, in times of trial and disappointment. The sun of God's bright love is then hidden from us by the clouds of adversity, and it would be dangerous for us to follow our natural bent, and awake, when perhaps too late, to the sad reality of our momentary folly.

Some advocate the mixture of Catholics and Protestants in society and family friendship, and think it would go a great way towards removing the bitterness and misunderstandings which now form such a chasm between us. Theorists on this idea have invented godless colleges and national schools, that children professing various creeds should be brought up together, and be able to bridge it over by their natural esteem for each other. This is a very spe-

cious fallacy, and few of our statesmen seem to perceive its defect. The children carry to school the ideas and traditions of their parents, and many a child has learnt to fight for its religion before it knew the meaning of it. In fact, the national system of education in Ireland is so only in name; it is denominational in reality. The fusion of races and religions never could take place, though so often tried. There are two parties always in mixed schools: if one is in the majority the others grow up cowards, because they live upon the tolerance of the former; and if the parties are equal feuds are begun in infant life which are perpetuated to manhood and old age. There are pitched battles generally between them, and each side is alternately victorious; every defeat must be wiped out, and new fuel is added by every victory. Bringing up the classes together has either one result or the other, and neither can go far towards forming a manly character or a spirited and honourable way of acting.

Taking the advanced term of education, such as that received in a university, we do not improve our position. The students in a university are generally of that dangerous state of existence in which seeds for future shame or honour can be easily planted. They are just budding into manhood, and their ripening passions are stronger than the curbs which reason or religion can place upon them. They want only an excuse, or a plausible pretext, for justifying themselves in those excesses which the corruption of our age too easily places at their disposal. Once

down in the mire of impurity, or any other soul-destroying juvenile sin, they become erratic in their principles and unbridled in their pursuit of pleasure. The lessons of youth are laughed at. Good-fellowship, manly sports, and athletic exercises take up the most part of their time, and they look forward more to being victorious in a boat-race than high in the class-list. A mixture of creeds here, where any creed has but slight hold upon its believers, is apt to create a spirit of indifference to all creeds whatever. The young mind that is cultivating itself in Aristophanes and Bell's Life at the same time is apt to laugh at dons, and gain applause from its companions in the way it mimics the intonation of the morning prayers or the solemn warnings to the preservation of propriety.

The actual state of our seats of learning at present too painfully bears out the justice of these remarks. If each persuasion had its own college and its own charter, there could be a grand rivalry, both of morality and education, started between each two, and all together; and thus the honour of each college, plus the students' ambition, would cause an improvement in the tone of each. The mixture of creeds is but a step to free-thinking and rationalism, and we fear that this system is upheld by Parliament, because the majority of its members have hazy notions about the necessity of dogma. No good can arise from the free intercourse between Protestants and Catholics, except that intercourse be of the most perfunctory and formal nature, such as the good-nature

of fellow-travellers in a steamboat or fellow-officers in a regiment. It would not be bad advice to young persons of all persuasions, 'Make friends of all your companions who differ from you in religion, but intimates of none.' The spirit of charity and of politeness, which is the guard of charity, requires that we be kind and civil to all men, whether they differ from us in religion or not; but it is quite a different thing to take them into our confidence, no matter how honourable or straightforward they may The vice we want to cloak will be attributed to our religious system; and we weaken the appreciation which an outsider may have of our religion by letting him see how useless are its precepts in our own special case. We owe something to the faith in which we are baptised, or into which we have been received at great sacrifices to ourselves, and we should never let any action of ours be construed into an argument against its sanctity.

The bringing up of children together and free family intercourse between persons of different religious beliefs are two fatal practices. In the first case children hear those dogmas they hold as part of their lives blasphemed, and begin to doubt that of which they were once so firmly convinced. An objection you cannot answer will never leave your mind, if it thrust home at one of your cherished convictions; and children in school can have very little theological knowledge. It is easy enough to read a book, and pick up an argument that will floor your uneducated companion; but it is very difficult to be

able to meet all the possible arguments, diatribes, and sneers which can be levelled by evil-designing men against any form of belief. One fact goes a great way with a child, and as it cannot distinguish between the dictates of a system and their abuse (how could it, since even its parent cannot do it!) it takes the fact for a whole induction, and its juvenile mind becomes more enfeebled than ever. empire has more diverse interests than a little village, and what suits one part of its vast dominions will not suit another. Its laws and customs must therefore vary according to the climates and countries in which its members live. A village is circumscribed, nearly all the inhabitants have the same customs and the same interests. Now take the Catholic Church, a vast spiritual empire extending over the whole world, and how can you compare its laws with the conventicle in Gospel-lane composed of two dozen of hearers? A schoolboy of this conventicle can pick up a custom from South America, and apply it to Ireland or the Isle of Man, and how can a Catholic boy, who was never forty yards from his mother's apron-string, answer this terrible sophism! This is one of the reasons why the Church has always set her face against mixed systems of education; and why some of her priests have gone so far as to assert that it is better for people to be brought up illiterate and innocent than learned and lascivious. America affords us an unfortunate example of the evils of mixed or godless education. Most of the unfortunate girls of Boston, by the confession of one of their own writers, trace their misfortune to mixed schools, where boys and girls are taught together until they are seventeen or eighteen years of age, and leave school wiser in vice than their parents.

Another objection which the Church has to the mixing together, in a friendly and intimate way, of children who profess different creeds, is the prospect of mixed marriages. A boy just growing into manhood is not proof against a sweet countenance and a pair of fascinating eyes, if these belong to a heretic, and he is sure to repeat the lines of Moore:

'From the heretic girl of my heart shall I fly, To seek somewhere else a more orthodox kiss?'

and act upon them in his unwisdom and want of experience. Youths do not foresee the heartrendings and bickerings which will arise from such an illassorted union until it is too late. Laws and advice and wisdom are all thrown away upon them. They only see the fair face and the fascinating manner, and every sage advice and remonstrance is flung to the winds. We see the consequences every day. Bishops have made stringent laws against mixed marriages, and priests have had to carry them out. It is our lot to witness the contentions, the deceptions, the harshness, and the cruelty which follow these marriages, but we are powerless to prevent them. The law sanctions them, and we are left helpless. Some time ago it was considered that men who married Catholic women were obliged to keep the promises they made them as to the education of their possible offspring in the Catholic faith. The judgment in the Agar-Ellis case has shown that honour is not to be expected when the supposed rights of a father are called in question. No priest or Catholic could, as a rule, conscientiously tolerate any friendship between persons of different creeds from which there is the slightest likelihood of a marriage to ensue.

Friendship with all, intimacy with none; and if friendship cannot be without intimacy, make a secrifice of the satisfaction. Better a small pang and privation now than tears and tribulations hereafter.

### CHAPTER XLVIII.

#### CONCLUSION.

PLOUGHING through such a field of arguments and speculations, it is no wonder if we should feel a little clogged with the mud of the errors we have been turning up for soil whereon to plant the germs of truth. We are weary, both writer and readers, and a short time to breathe before closing the volume must be a welcome treat. There was an idea throughout of pointing out the weak points, and indeed the strong points also, in systematised errors, in order that, by seeing how untenable they were, attention might be turned to that one grand system of faith and discipline where everything hangs together so

harmoniously, and where every theory is so consonant to reason and to Revelation, either in their separate spheres or when blended by the skill of our dialec-We have not overlooked one important ingredient in the great process of conversion, and it has been hinted at in various ways. No mode or system is of any use without it. It enters into all pursuits, and animates them. It sustains them in their zigzag progress, and helps them to surmount difficulties. It crowns them in the day of their victory, and sweetens their achievements. It is the offspring of the soul in the beginning of the race, and the darling child of it when that race is run. It crowns the edifice of life and lives for ever in heaven, and that ingredient is PRAYER. 'Ask, and you shall receive,' are the words of our Lord. 'Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.' Prayer simply in its nature, as the petition of an indigent soul to a Being all rich and bountiful, knows no race, creed, opinion, error, belief. It is the child of nature. The poor soul, seeing its weakness, and bewildered by the doubts and difficulties which beset its search after truth, knows there is one Supreme Being who can enlighten it, and show it clearly what is right and credible. Then it prays; and when it prays for the necessary light the Divine Voice has assured us that it will be heard. When struggling against temptations and objections and difficulties in the search after truth, do not ask what it is and then turn away before an answer is given, like Pilate,

but ask for it, and you shall receive. When the truth is seen, and worldly difficulties stand in the way of its acceptance, pray, and strength will be given to surmount all obstacles. When truth has been attained, and dark doubts and new difficulties come to obscure it and hide its bright and shining face from your soul, pray, and a light will come from heaven to illumine the mist and darkness in which you are placed. When the knowledge and certainty of the truth point out to you the rectitude of your actions, and passion or pleasure would fain entice you away from the path of rectitude, pray, and strength will be given you to adhere to the doctrines you profess. When through life the Christian duties appear irksome and disagreeable, and it requires an effort to man yourself to the discharge of them, pray, and they will become as easy as in the days of your first fervour. When death Sacraments have to be received, and when you diffide in your own fitness for their reception, pray, and the perfect contrition and pure dispositions will be granted to you, which will make you glow with heavenly consolation. When the last moment in this world is approaching, and you fear to meet your God because of your manifold offences, pray for mercy, and the Jesus who answered the prayer of the thief upon the cross will not be deaf to your petition. PRAYER is the one way in which all, infidel, heretic, atheist, Jew, Mahometan, Protestant, or Catholic, can approach God. The most degraded child of Adam, as well as the most exalted seraph in

heaven, can approach His Throne, and are welcome to approach His Throne, and pour forth their petitions. PRAY, then, for light and grace; and light and grace, and faith, hope, and charity, and heaven itself, will be granted to you.

There is a sentence in the Synod of Southwark penned by that saintly Bishop, Dr. Grant, to which it is well to call attention. He says (app. ix.): 'It is mentioned of a Benedictine missionary, in the time of our English persecutions, that he gained Protestants by avoiding discussion, and by simply urging them to pray for light, and for the will to yield to it as soon as it should appear.' No one can expect so great a grace as that of conversion without praying for it.

The late Father Ignatius Spencer saw the efficacy of this mode of converting people. He went from place to place, through Ireland, England, Scot-- land, Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, and Switzerland, and his whole sermon-power and exhortations, with that anxious will which he put into his thoughts, was, 'Pray for the conversion of England.' He knew that those outside the fold were slow to pray for any grace of the kind; and he exhorted and besought all those who possessed the treasure of faith to spend a portion of the time devoted to their spiritual exercises in praying for the conversion of England. He even obtained an indulgence from the Holy See for those who should say three Hail Marys for the conversion of England, with Help of Christians, pray for us, added every day for a month. Many conversions have taken place since, and many can account for their entrance into the Church by summing up various circumstances; but only in heaven is it known how many of these conversions were obtained by the prayers of the cloistered nuns and devout ecclesiastics and faithful people, who were moved to make their petitions to Heaven through the warm requests of the poor barefooted Passionist.

St. Ambrose, when he saw St. Monica praying so earnestly for the conversion of her son Augustine. said, 'The child of so many tears cannot be lost.' It is a touching thing to read in his Confessions the account of the death of his mother, and where he asks us to remember her saintly soul at the altar of God and in the Holy Sacrifice. He owed his conversion to her prayers, and he knew by experience the efficacy of prayers for the spiritual welfare of others. All the Saints have known the same, following the example of the Saint of Saints, whose last beautiful prayer in the Supper-room was made to His Heavenly Father that we might be one.

We are bound to each other by many ties. We have received kindnesses from generous hands which we can never return. Favours unsought have been bestowed upon us by those whom we shall never see in this world, and whose names we do not remember. We may have scandalised those who looked to us for example and edification. These debts we can never pay, and these restitutions we can never make of our own unaided efforts. Let us pray for them.

God will hear us, perhaps, if our demerits do not prevent Him doing so; at all events He will give us credit for a good-will.

Then it is expedient that we should all belong to one fold, under one Shepherd. The disunion of Christendom is a sad thing to behold, after the labours of saints and martyrs through nearly nineteen hundred years. Did and do the severed branches of Christian people pray for this unity? It is to be feared that the question must be answered in the negative, or our good God would long ago have granted the request sent up by so many.

Let those who are outside the fold pray for light, and the will to follow it. Let those who are inside pray that their scattered brethren may soon be added to their numbers. Let the throne of grace and mercy be besieged; and a benign Lord will cast His merciful eye on the broken walls and scattered inhabitants of Sion, and, putting aside our unworthiness, will build up the heavenly Jerusalem in this world once more. The object of our aspirations may be more easy of attainment than we think. Let each one do his part in the general prayer for the union of all under one head; and He who prayed so earnestly that all might be one will look with kindness on those who follow in His footsteps.



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